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THE NEW AGE

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THE NEW AGE

A JOURNAL DEVOTED TO CULTURE AND PROGRESS

EDITOR H. D. RAJAH.

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VOL. IV OCTOBER 1937 NO. 5

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The New Age

VOL. IV OCTOBER 1937 NO. 5

THE STRUGGLE FOR DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS

A CALL FROM THE ANDAMANS

Amidst jubilations on the formation of the Congress ministries, the news of mass-hunger-strike in the Andamans came like a bombshell. The age-old walls of the Cellular jail in Port-Blair, which has housed India's dauntless fighters for freedom since 1857, was once more the scene of struggle. Every succeeding upsurge of our struggle for independence has brought to the shores of that island an ever increasing number of the Victims of Imperialist wrath. Through decades, those walls have witnessed the silent suffering of our martyrs. Those walls have become the symbol of imperialist repression against our movement for freedom. Millions of anxious eyes watched the spectacle of agony and of the forced feeding of 232 young men.

A Rude Reminder :

The Andaman action was a rude reminder to those who might have been lulled to sleep by the sweet talk about 'the Ganges of harmony and confidence' flowing between the government and the Congress ministers. Imperialism might be throwing a few crumbs through the hands of the Congress ministers in a few provinces. But it has not abdicated. The four simple demands put forward by the Andaman prisoners in their petition to the government of India, sums up the programme of Imperialist repression; and that programme stands. One thousand and nine-hundred and ninety-nine detenus languish in the jails and the detention camps of Bengal. A number of state prisoners and convicted politicals are still in the Indian prisons, though a few have been recently released. The rule of the repressive law proceeds without any break under the 'popular' Huq-Sarkar Ministry. Young men are sent to jail for possessing even a single copy of a proscribed book. The provisions of B. P. S. A. originally meant against terrorists are being applied to drive strikers out of house and home within twenty-four hours. To crown it all, the penal settlement in the Andamans with its Cellular jail is kept up as a place of terror to tame" the defiant and violent spirits".

Imperialism has not Abdicated :

"Look at this picture and that "cry

the Newspaper head-lines. Political prisoners are being released where Congress has the majority to form ministries; while in the minority provinces repression continues as before. Does this mean that repression can be abolished and democratic rights and liberties won for the people by securing a parliamentary majority in the provincial legisiatures under the new Constitution? This is a dangerous illusion. In reality Congress ministries have not much altered the scene. Repression of revolutionary anti-Imperialist movements and tendencies is, so to speak, a central subject. Major repressive and anti-working class laws are acts of the central legislatures. The Andamans, are administered by the government of India. The viceroy in his letter to Mr. Saxeana gave a threat which seems to have escaped the notice of the press. He said "when authority has in the end to be asserted, the consequences might be tragic not only to those who were acting in definace of it, but also to many others" This was significant of the attitude of the Govt. towards this question and still the Andamans continues to be a living Threat to those who may oppose Imperialism.

Repression Sharpens :

Let us not be deluded by the few releases of political prisoners which Imperialism has allowed through the new ministries. These are undoubtedly the fruits of the unprecedented victory of the popular forces in the last elections, of the rising tempo of mass struggle. But the main struggle is still ahead of us. It is this which Imperialism is determined to suppress. The New Constitution with the power at the centre firmly in the hands of a reactionary block of the Imperialists, the Princes and the Landlords, is the instrument it has shaped to carry this out more effectively and efficiently. With the war situation swiftly maturing in Europe and the world, Imperialism wants to commandeer the resources of India without let or hindrance. For this purpose it must suppress revolutionary anti-Imperialist tendencies, Labour and Peasant and Communist movements all the more effectively. It must make further inroads on the almost non-existing democratic rights and civil liberties of our people, in the name of discharging its "obligations to the community." In pursuing this policy of intensified repression, Imperialism is attempting to obtain for it as wide a support among the possessing classes as possible. In the period of Congress ministries, it fondly hopes to break the united resistance of the hated Constitution, to commit the National Congress finally to the policy of surrender and compromise. It hopes to break the GROWING United National Front of struggle for independence, democracy and bread, to isolate the left elements and parties from the masses and crush them.

But Must be Fought :

This hope must be frustrated. This can be done by broadening and sharpening the United Front struggle of the toiling masses for democratic rights. The Wardha programme of the Working Committee of Feb 27 implies fight for democratic rights and civil liberties. The Congress is pledged to develop mass sanctions to enforce this programme. Ministries or no ministries the mass struggle for democratic rights, against Imperialist repression must not slacken, must not lose its all-India character. It cannot and must not be replaced by melodramatic appeals to the bureaucracy and the police for co-operation and to serve the people, etc. It has often been repeated that the ministers are in office and not in power. The Congress ministers if they mean to carry out the Wardha programme, shall have to fight against the resistence of the bureaucratic machinery which is firmly controlled by the governors and the viceroy. They will lose in this fight and Congress if they rely upon the tactics of 'change

of heart'. It is the growing forces of mass-struggle in the streets and in the countryside which alone can strengthen their hands and enable them to enforce the demands of the election Manifesto in the teeth of Imperialist resistance.

The Lead From Wardha?

The events of the last month has confirmed our analysis of the sharp turn towards reformism and concilation. The dangers which we pointed out are becoming increasingly real. The Congress ministries instead of galvanising the struggle, as some fondly hoped are proving to be brakes on its development. The last meeting of the Working Committee did not busy itself with a plan to sharpen the mass movement outside the legislatures to strengthen the hands of the ministers to carry forward on an all-India scale the struggle against the Constitution and for democratic rights. It was more occupied with the details of the constructive programme before the Congress ministries, then with developing mass power and pressure to enable the ministers to carry out the demands of the Wardha programme. The poignant issue of the Andaman Hunger-Strike was before it. The call to support and develop into an all-India campaign the United Front movement which was developing in Bengal and in the other cities of India under the influence of the Andaman Action was not heeded to. The Congress ministers were already being faced with difficulties in implementing the Wardha demand regarding civil liberties. These difficulties were in connection with the release of political prisoners convicted for "violence", of Communist prisoners and detenus, with the lifting of bans on labour and other organisations alleged to be under Communist influence, and withdrawing the prohibition of radical political literature. The decision of the Working Committee on this issue was not published in the press. Whatever it was, it surely was not a decision to inaugarate a mass campaign in collaboration with the labour and peasant organisations to assert these democratic demands to create mass pressure to strengthen the hands of the ministers. The Working Committee in its last session, functioned more like a shadow super-cabinet behind that six Congress Cabinets-rather than a general staff leading the mass-struggle against the Slave Constitution and for civil liberties.

The Record of Congress Ministers :

We were told that the Congress ministries were a section of our National Army of struggle against Imperialism occupying "Strategic positions" in the administrative machinery of the government. How have they advanced the fight for democratic rights from this "point of vantage"? Their record during the last two months is at once a disappointment to the people and a disgrace to the Congress. We did not expect the Congress ministers to perform wonders or to spirit away Imperialist repression without a struggle. But we did not expect them to speak in the language we are accustomed to hear from the Imperialist rulers. Their statements have shown that they have forgotten the fundamental relation between the Imperialist rulers and the Indian people, viz-that of the exploiter and the exploited. They have interpreted the resolutions of the Congress in a manner which amounts to a policy of surrender and compromise with Imperialism.

In a communique issued by the Madras government on the release of the Kottapattam comrades, Mr. C. Rajagopalachari the premier of Madras, stated that "the government cannot tolerate and will take all steps to prevent any dissemination of class hatred and ideas invoking the use of organised and unorganised violence in furtherance of any object". When we consider that this statement was made in the context of the sequel to the wholly unjustifiable banning of a Summer School of politics and economics

which was popularising Marxist and Socialist theories, it attains a special significance. This means that the Congress ministry is falling in line with the Imperialist policy of suppressing even the study of Marxism and Socialism. They are lending their support to the suppression of freedom of thought-to the suppression of those civil liberties for which they are pledged to fight as loyal congressmen. Mr. K. M. Munshi the Minister for Home affairs and Law of Bombay, expressed himself in the same strain in his communique on the first of August. Mahatma Gandhi, the other day stated that Congress ministries do not mean license "to sedition and propaganda of violence.

Towing the Imperialist Line :

This line of argument only serves to justify Imperialist repression. It is usual for Imperialists to suppress the propaganda for socialism and Communism by branding it as "dissemination of the ideas of class hatred and of the organised use of violence". Congress ministers by towing this line are coming forward not as defenders of civil liberties-but as the tools for their continued suppression. When we talk of civil liberties, we mean those liberties as they are understood in bourgeois-democratic countries like England. A bonafide political party, which believes that the present state of Society can be bettered only through class-struggle, against the exploiting and oppressing minority, must have a right and freedom to place its ideas before the public to be accepted or rejected. This is how civil liberty and freedom of thought, opininion and propaganda is understood in England. Prof. Laski-who is no Communist-has expressed himself in this sense, in speaking about the right of the Communists to carry on their propaganda. In England the Communist Party exists legally and carries on its fullfledged propaganda. But, say the Imperialists. England is is different. Public opinion there is far more mature and therefore such liberties can be allowed there. Have Mr. Rajgopalachari and Mr. Munshi now become converts to the Imperialist theory of India's immaturity for civil and political liberties?

This is not all. In Bombay the Congress ministry has not released Communist detenus and has not removed bans on the communist organisations. In C. P. in Madras as well as in Bombay the proscription against socialist and communist publication is not lifted. In C. P. and Madras the translation of the Communist Manifesto of 1848 remains baned. In arriving at the settlement of the strike at Gokak, the government of Bombay have introduced a new principle of the employers' recognising the union conditionally. The settlement arrived at with the mediation of Mr. Gulzarilal Nanda the parliamentary secretary of the Congress premier includes the term that "The Company will accord recognition of a union of workers if its constitution provides and the union undertakes that it would adopt only peaceful and legitimate means that disputes arising between the company and the employees will be settled by negotiations and conciliation and failing that by arbitration". By this settlement Congress ministry instead of using 'its strategic position' to force the millowners to accept the deamands of the unconditional recognition of the workers' union, has on the other hand forced the workers to relinquish the right to strike!

This is not all too. Under the so called 'Congress Raj', there have been lathi charges, firing and section 144 againt Cawnpore strikers. At Madras five workers who were picketing during a strike were arrested and have been sentenced. There have been orders to keep peace against peasant workers in Behar and the orders under sec 108 against some socialists in Madras have not been Cancelled. The excellently written pamphlet on the Moplah Rebellion

from the pen of Mr. Soumyendranath Tagore was banned by the Congress ministry of Behar. It is note-worthy that the facts stated in this pamphlet are all from official sources.

The Drift Must Stop :

We have enumerated these facts not with a view to make a chief criticism of the Congress ministries. We know that the ministers cannot give us our democratic rights with a stroke of the pen. But we do not want the ministers, who are congressmen, to use the language of Imperialism. We do not want them to stretch their principle of 'Non-Violence' until it becomes identical with Imperialist violence against the people. Let them not indetify themselves with the government and vulgarise the demands of the Election Manifesto and the Faizpur and Wardha Resolutions. They must keep in tact their indentity as the representative of the exploited people as against the exploiting power of Imperialism. Whenever they cannot enforce a demand in the Congress programme-let them not temporise-let them not twisit and turn that demand so as to suit it to the dictates of Imperilism. They must make frank statements to the people showing where and how the New Constitution prevents the enforcement of the Congress demands. They must not gloss over the difficulties and the resistance they need at the hands of the governors and bureaucracy. They must never forget that their strength is the strength of the mass-movement which backs them. The masses have begun to identify the congress with anti-Imperialist struggle. If the Congress ministers become defenders of Imprialist repression and the crushing of the democratic rights of the people, that would result in a wide spread demoralisation in our National Front of struggle. It would mean a terrible setback in the advance already made.

The Call from the Andamans & the Response :

The purpose of the mass hunger strike in the Andamans was to focus the attention of the people on Imperialist repression-especially its ugly features in Bengal. It was a call to all anti-Imperialists to carry forward and develop the mass struggle against repression and for the civil liberties of the people. They were not fighting merely for petty jail reforms-nor even for their own repatriation. The heroic action was a reminder to the exploited masses that repression must be fought through mass struggle alone. Their call was enthusiastically fallowed up all over the country. The students organisations of Bengal and other provinces were in the forefront. It was the mass participation of the students, in the Andaman campaign organised by the National Congress the CSP and the other anti-Imperialist organisations that gave it sweep and striking force. Events that followed led to the rapid broadening of the Andaman campaign in Calcutta into a united front mass campaign for the demands of the hunger-strikers in the Andamans and in the other jails. The mass meetings and demonstrations were organised throughout the Jute mill area and the issue of the struggle for the release of political prisoners and detenus was linked up with the jute workers' own struggle against victimisation and anti-working class repression. On the 5th of August a huge mass demonstration of jute workers was held in which they demonstrated for the enforcement of the terms of settlement of their last strike and for the Andaman demands. There were kisan demonstrations under the auspices of the BPKC in various districts of Bengal. In the demonstrations for the All-India Kisan Day the Andaman issue was again placed in the forefront and linked up with the repression against peasant workers in Noakhali and other districts where they are being prosecuted as members of criminal tribes.

Country Wide Campaign :

It was not only in Bengal that the Andaman call received such a rousing response. It was not only in Bengal that the campaign against political repression became broadened and widened into a united front campaign for democratic rights and civil liberties, In Cawnpore, Delhi, Kharagpur and in the other industrial centres of India there were joint demonstrations of students, workers and congressmen. In Bombay the mass campaign against political repression and for democratic rights is initiated and lead by working class organisations. Several successful meetings and demonstrations have taken place in the month of August under the joint auspices of the BPTUC, the Kisan propaganda Committee, the 'F' & 'G' Ward Congress Committees and the Students' Federation. The focal point of the campaign in Bombay was the non-release of Communists and Labour Leaders from prison and detention. This was linked up with the basic demands of the workers, peasants and the students. Even in certain cities of the Indian States where every type of political activity is smothered under the autocratic rule of the Princes, echoes of the Andaman agitation were heard. In Bangalore a procession of Students on the Andaman day was banned.

The struggle against Imperialist repression for the release of political prisoners is indissolubely linked up with the general struggle of the people, especially of the workers and peasants for their basic rights. It is a part of their struggle for the right to live, to organise collective resistance (right of Strike), to form their association, for the right of the freedom of press and speech. The suppression of the democratic rights and the civil liberties of the people brings out sharply the fundamental conflict between exploiting Imperialism and its helpers on the one hand and the exploited masses on the other. As long as this basic antagonism exists, as long as Imperialism exists, every type of repression whether by Congress ministries or by reactionary ministries is Imperialist repression. It must be fought. It must by fought by building up the united front of the exploiting classes—of the Congress committees, of the workers, peasants and students' organisations. It cannot be justified by reference to any abstract moral law.

United Front Struggle for Democratic Rights:

Our struggle for freedom has reached a stage when its further development requires the widening of civil liberties, of the winning of the basic democratic rights. During the last two decades an ever broadening section of the masses is being drawn in to the movement. The toiling masses not only swells our national front of struggle, but its most advanced section the working class is steadily advancing to a leading position. With the growth of the organised struggle of the workers and peasants they are coming up against the barriers which prevent them from organising their unions, from putting collective resistance indefence of their right to live, which shut them off from the right to vote. The masses have already begun the conscious fight for those rights. Even in backward rural areas, workers and peasants are lining up in this fight. In Gokak, 3,000 workingmen and women fought doggedly for 8 months in defence of their right to form their union. In zamindar-ridden provinces peasants are forming their Kisan Sanghs in the teeth of the victimisation by the landlords and his agents. In a Behar village peasant tenants have boycotted a zamindar because he maltreated a peasant. Even in the States, which are under the heel of the most tyrrannous autocracy, the toilers and the people have begun to consciously fight for these basic rights.

Not an Abstract Slogan-But a Reality.

The fight for democratic rights and for civil liberties is today no longer an abstract slogan nor a mere fashionable cry. It is already a reality. Already the fight is proceeding on a hundred scattered fronts; and the fighters are the men and women who toil. The task is to coordinate the struggle, to unify the various fighting units, into one mighty front of the people against Imperialist repression and exploitation. The working class which through out the world is coming forward as the champion of the democratic rights of the people, is on the move in India too. It is already taking initiative in this task. In cawnpore, in the recent strike, the proletariat was successful in mobilising the entire towns people and the Congress Committees to march side by side with it in processions, in defence of its right to live, in defence of its union and against the repression of the police. Mr. Pant's success in forcing the mill owners to recognise the Mazdoor Sabha is due not so much to the strategic position" he occupies; but rather to the mass pressure of the united front of workers, and artisans, traders, shop-keepers and students, of the Congress Committee and the Labour Union.

The Andaman Prisoners have suspended their hunger-strike and are being brought back to India. But the movement, the mass campaign against repression which their action has set in motion must continue and gather force. It must be unified with the workers and peasants struggle. Congress Committees, Labour and peasant unions, and student organisations must move forward to mobilise the masses to assert and enforce the democratic demands of the Congress programme, unions must be recognised, strikes must not be allowed to be broken by section 144 or lathi charges, oppression of zamindars, and village and government officials must not be tolerated, illegal exactions must cease, prosecutions and victimisations of labour and peasant workers must cease, all political prisoners must be released without discriminations, all bans and repressive legislations must be withdrawn-around these simple slogans the front of resistance and struggle must be built in every city, district and taluka town. That is the only way to fight against repression. The sufferings and the sacrifice of the Andaman Comrades must not be in vain.

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THE SPANISH STRUGGLE AND INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

By Hajra Begum.

[Comrade Hajra Begum is a prominent member of the Allahabad Congress Socialist Party. She recently toured the Andhra Province with Comrade Batliwala, and opened the Andhra Provincial Students Conference. Ed.]

"But the sacrifices..., the experience of the history of Spain..., and the new methods introduced by the totalitarian states of waging undeclared war on a country, make it imperative in the interests of all and, before everything else, in the interests of European peace to reach a speedy and clear-cut settlement. This settlement can be reached only by the full restoration of the national sovereignty of the power that expresses the will of the people, as manifested in the elections of February, 1936. That will has acquired fresh and poignant validity in the tragic fact of the exodus of populations who, as at Malaga, preferred to run all the risks involved in escaping from the domination of the rebels and seeking refuge in loyal territory, Let those, therefore, who have under-estimated the moral resources of the Spanish people, decide to recognise their error and resign themselves to accepting the inevitability of the victory of the Spanish Republic." Senor Alvarez del Vayo, Spanish Foreign Minister speaking before the Council of the League of Nations on May 27, 1937.

It was on July 18th. 1936, that Franco, backed by a number of regular Army Officers, rose in rebellion against the popularly elected and legally constituted 'democratic' Government of Spain. Franco had carefully planned a swift coup-d'etat beginning with simultaneous military uprisings in the principal cantonments of Madrid, Catalonia, Viscaya, and Andalusia, and culminating in his victorious march and triumphal entry into the Spanish Capital, Madrid. But Franco was mistaken, and his dream did not come true.

The stillness of the night of July 18th was broken by the sharp, clear, resonant words of Comrade Dolores Ibarruri, broadcasting from the Union Radio, Madrid, calling to the people of Spain to arm, organise and defend themselves against the sudden onslaught of the traitor generals.

The voice of La Passionaria stirred the hearts of the brave and freedom—loving Spaniards, it inspired them with a sense of duty and devotion to the cause of their Republic, and it filled their breasts with courage, determination and enthusiastic fervour. It reached the remotest villages and factories of Spain. The thunder of fascist guns on July 19th only inspired the people with a superhuman courage.

In Madrid, almost unarmed workers and intellectuals, assisted by a handful of Guards took within a few hours such formidable citadels as the Montana, Carabancheles and Vicalvaro barracks where the rebels had barricaded themselves with all their armaments. Before sunset all arms were in the hands of the anti-fascists. The same happened in Catalonia, in the

Basque country and in several other districts.

Within a few days the armed workers and peasants had driven the fascists out of Albacete, Murcia, Badajoz and several other rebel strongholds. The generals who had imagined that they could conquer the Spanish people in a few hours were themselves conquered by the unarmed people in a few days. The mutiny of the officers was suppressed by the energy, endurance and devotion of the workers, soldiers, and in fact, the whole admirable population of Spain including its heroic women and old proletarian fighters. The first round ended with a complete victory of the people on all fronts.

And yet, today, after fifteen months of a cruel, merciless Civil War, one fails to discover signs which might inspire hopes of a speedy end of this bitter, indeterminate Spanish struggle.

For the people of Spain this war has meant extreme privation and hardship, inhuman suffering and untold misery in the past and the prospects of worsening conditions in the times ahead. It has already taken a toll of tens of thousands of human lives—including hundreds of innocent, unarmed and defenceless old men, women and children. It has razed to the ground, and reduced flourishing towns and beautiful historical, buildings to heaps of ruin. In several parts of the country it has paralysed the healthy normal activity of the people.

For the people of Spain this war has meant a denial of their elementary national right to arm and defend themselves. It has meant a very effective and efficiently organised blockade of the Spanish people by such leading European Powers as Great Britain, France, Germany and Italy. It has meant the bombardment and destruction of Defenceless coastal towns by German Warships and Aeroplanes. It has meant the torpedoing and sinking of helpless merchant vessels of several nationalities, bringing food, clothing and medical supplies to the Spanish people, by Italian submarines. It has meant an open conspiracy by 'Civilised' Europe to torture and starve the brave and heroic people of Spain slowly to death.

WHY?

Franco and his generals were smashed by the will and valour of the people of Spain within a fortnight of their revolt. And yet, instead of being sent to their just doom, they have been actively supported and openly helped by Hitler and Mussolini. Britain and France know that men, money and munitions are pouring into Spain from Italy and Germany to aid Franco. And yet they dare not raise a finger. Britain and France know that thousands of men all over the world are willing to volunteer and fight shoulder to shoulder with their Spanish comrades. And yet they will not let a single person enter spain. Britain and France know that the greatest need of the Spanish people is arms and airplanes, for which the Spanish people are willing to pay hard cash down. And yet they will not sell a single bullet.

Why is 'Civilised' Europe strangling the Spanish people?

"The Trenches of Madrid are the trenches of Democracy. The Spanish people today are fighting the battle of World Democracy. People of France! Beware! It is our turn today, it may be yours tomorrow!" La passionaria's appeal to the French people in Paris for arms and airplanes for Spain.

To any intelligent and impartial reader of current foreign news it must have been clear long before now that the heroic struggle of the Spanish people is no longer a civil war against the Traitor Franco. It is a war of intervention carried on by German and Italian Fascism on Spanish soil against the Spanish people who are defending their independence, democracy and Bread.

It is the same story all over the world. Democracy is tolerated by the bourgeoisie, the capitalists, industrialists and financiers, only so long as it ensures control of the State apparatus and power to them. But the moment Democracy tries to become real, and pass from theory to practice; the moment it broadens its base and range sufficiently to include the masses; the moment it tries to transfer Power from the hands of the privileged few to the hands of the majority of the People, as when the toiling masses take to shaping their own lives and begin *fighting* for their rights and interests; at that moment the bourgeoisie throws off the mask and reveals its real lust for power and dictatorship in all its naked hideousness. Time and again this has been corroborated by facts and history. Mussolini's march on Rome, Hitler's ascent to power in Germany, the massacre of the Socialists in the streets of Vienna, and now the revolt of Franco are succeeding chapters of the same open and revealing book.

The immediate cause of the civil war in Spain was the steady growth of the Workers' and Peasants' movements, and an intensification of the class struggle which, after several years of ferment and toil was rapidly evolving and pointing the way to a free and democratic Spain. Within the limits and framework of a Bourgeois-democratic revolution, the toiling masses of Spain forged ahead for power and a greater share in the government of their country by all peaceful and constitutional means. At every fresh election more and yet more representatives of the workers and peasants were returned, who stood for real democracy and interests of the people and were determined to legislate accordingly.

The people of Spain had, more over, the examples of Italy, Germany, and Austria before them. The lessons of the struggle of the people of those countries were fresh in their minds. Like the people of France, they had anticipated and were prepared for a fascist uprising. The splendid results of the Popular Front in France, in checkmating the tide of fascism and nipping it in the bud had led to the formation of a Popular Front in Spain. A united front of all the anti-fascist forces, the workers, peasants, petty bourgeoisie, and radical intelligentsia, was set up. The February 1936 elections were a brilliant victory for the Spanish Popular Front. From that day, as far as the people of Spain were concerned, the fate of Fascism in Spain was sealed.

The Bourgeoisie of Spain, the Grandees, Nobles, big landlords, could brook it no longer. They could not let the people take power out of their hands so easily. Secretly, feverishly, they conspired against the people.

At home the Spanish Fascists could only find allies in the military officer caste, a majority of whom were related to and closely connected with the feudal parasitic landlords and in the armed monarchist Carlist gangs. But the Spanish fascists knew very well that this was not enough. The odds were too heavy against them. Abroad however, the German and Italian bourgeoisie were looking out for fresh fields and pastures new. Emboldened by the Abyssinian adventure and the utter impotence of the League of Nations, Mussolini was dreaming of converting the Mediterranean into an Italian lake, Hitler wanted to divert the attention of the Germans from the terrible conditions at home to the question of German Colonies. The Franco-Soviet pact and the Popular Front governments in France and Spain were thorns in the sides of both Hitler and Mussolini. The foundations of the Rome-Berlin axis were thus laid. The bourgeoisie of Spain concluded an unholy alliance with the bourgeoisie of Germany and Italy. In return for help against the people they guaranteed important economic and military

concessions and thus delivered their own country to the German and Italian bourgeoise. It was a godsend for both Hitler and Mussolini and they eagerly jumped at it. At home the power behind Franco was the leading industrial magnate of Spain, Juan March. Abroad the power behind March was the Hitler-Mussolini clique.

At first Franco's understanding with Hitler and Mussolini was denied by all the three of them. But truth has a habit of coming out. What is more, the very impatience and crude methods of the fascists betray them sooner than accomplished facts. Faced by their own utterances, cornered by their own deeds, the fascists find it impossible to hide their minds and faces. Today they openly, brazen-facedly own their dirty commitments and air their foul senti ments. Let them speak for themselves.

"Franco's victory will be in part an Italian victory as Italy has not remained neutral but fought." Mussolini writing in the journal 'Popolo D'Italia' on June 26th. 1937.

"The desire of Germany to obtain the iron ore of Northern Spain must take precedence before any consideration of international co-operation for peace." Hitler speaking at the District Congress of the Nazi party at Wuerzburg on June 27th. 1937.

When the traitor generals lost the first round without and serious struggle to the people of Spain, Franco's first act was to draft thousands of Moorish mercenaries from Africa into Spain, promising them rich loot for the destruction of Spain. This mercenary army was organised and equipped with the weapons sent by Franco's German and Italian allies. At the same time the Spanish people were prevented from procuring the necessary means of defence by the hypocritical "non-Intervention" blockade of spain initiated by the National Govt, of Imperialist Britain, and forced upon an unwilling Popular Front Govt, in France. Later whole units of the regular Italian army and thousands of German "volunteer" Soldiers poured into Spain.

To the offensive which Franco now launched in Estramadura, the Spanish people could only oppose their naked breast. Badajoz fell before the combined onslaught of Moorish, German and Italian troops supported by numerous tanks and modern aircraft. This was followed by an orgy of unprecedented terrorism. Five thousand unarmed workers were massacred in the bull-ring of Badajoz alone by the order of the rebel general Varela.

Having taken Badajoz the fascist hordes with their hundreds of tanks and foreign aircrafts marched against Madrid. This time their superior strength in men and munitions, the undisguised help of Italy and Germany and the inactivity to which the democratic governments of Europe have been condemned by British diplomacy, had inspired them with hopes of a swift and easy conquest. And then a miracle happened.

November 7th 1936, will ever remain a red letter day in international working cass history. For on that day the rebels reached the gates of Madrid. *They have yet to enter the city.* "No Pasaran!" was the slogan of the antifascist forces on July 18th. "They shall not pass!" was repeated on November 7th. To it was added another slogan, "Madrid will be the grave of Fascism!" And in that hour the people of Madrid, roused to the highest pitch of heroism and enthusiasm, formed with their naked bodies an insurmountable barrier which has not yielded to all the might of international facsicm.

The defence of Madrid was primarily the work of the Heroic Spanish workers, whose ranks were cemented by that glorious standard bearer of liberty, the INTERNATIONAL BRIGADE. It was in no small measue due to the indomitable courage and sacrifices of this international unit that Madrid did not yield and never will.

The port of Malaga fell not to the Spanish fascists but to the Italian army in Spain. Mussolini himself confirmed this openly. The victory of the fascist hordes at Malaga was not all due to superior arms or strategy. It was to a very large extent due to insufficient resistance on the part of the defenders, due to treachery within their ranks.

But the soldiers of the people defeated the fascists in one battle after another. At Jarama, Guadalajara, Pozoblanco, and more recently at Brunete, Villanueva de la Granada, and Belchite, the fascists were routed and fled leaving prisoners, guns and tanks in the hands of the people.

Things were looking black for Hitler and Mussolini in Spain. Franco was losing ground and their own armies had suffered defeats. Something had to be done and done soon, something even more effective than the "non-intervention" blockade of Spain. So early in May, 1937, the fascists threw their whole weight against the Basques. One by one the Basque cities were besieged, stormed, bombarded and razed to the ground. It was possible to destroy these towns even though they could not be taken. The first to go was Durango, then on April 27th went Guernica, the ancient Basque capital, the seat of Basque culture and traditions. It has been established since that Guernica was bombarded by the order of the German General Staff and that 120 German airplanes of the latest type took part in its destruction. Britain and France, the champions of "non-intervention", did not protest and conveniently ignored the issue. The brave Basques put up a heroic resistance and fought every inch of their territory yielding and retreating only in face of the heaviest odds. Bilbao was resolutely defended but fell at last on June 21st to a fascist army of 40-50 thousand including several Italian units, airplanes, guns and tanks. The fall of Bilbao was openly hailed by fascist Italy as a just revenge for the Italian reverse at Guadalajara. The Turin journal "Stampa" wrote:

"The capture of Bilbao is an occasion for justifiable pride on the part of the Italians; it is a magnificent page in the martial fame of our army......In a few weeks or months we shall reach the other principal military objectives."

The fall of Santander placed most of the Basque country in rebel hands.

This was not all. The fascist dictators were seething with rage at the prolongation of the Spanish issue, at the incompetence of their agent Franco, at the manifestations of international solidarity with the Spanish people. The ultimate outcome of their Spanish venture was more than ever in doubt. They wanted to make quick work of Spain before it was too late. The blood-lust went to their heads again and they struck out this time at the "non-intervention" farce which was getting on their nerves, furiously.

Admiral von Feschel, commander of the German naval forces in Spanish waters, telegraphed to the Spanish Minister of war, Senor Prieto, that he would fire at all Republican aircraft which might approach German ships. The Spanish Govt. replied to this unprovoked threat by warning ships of the international control fleet not to lie in rebel harbours. This was ignored by Germany and, to suit the action to their words, the German warship, "Deutschland", lying in the rebel harbour Iviza, where it had no business to be under the control scheme, fired without provocation on two reconnoitering Spanish Govt. airplanes. The airplanes retailated by bombing the "Deutschland". Here was an opportunity for the Fascist dictators. Hitler ordered the bombardment of the peaceful port of Almeria on May 31st, killing hundreds of unprepared defenceless men, women and children. On the same day both Germany and Italy left the Non-intervention Committee.

And this is what the British Prime Minister, Mr. N. Chamberlain, had to say about it:

"When I think of what the experiences of the German Navy have been, of the loss of life and the mutilation of men in the Deutschland and of the natural feelings of indignation and resentment which must be aroused by such incidents as that I must say that the German Govt. in merely withdrawing their ships and then saying that they consider this incident closed, have shown a degree of restraint which we all ought to recognise,"

The horror and indignation caused all over the world by the bombardment of Almeria was hardly to Hitler's liking. Instead of intimidating France and Britain into active intervention on behalf of Franco it had precisely the contrary effect of raising a storm of World-wide protests against fascist tyranny and hypocracy. So another incident was staged.

Germany announced to the world blatantly on June 23rd that her cruiser 'Liepzig' had been attacked and torpedoed by a Spanish Govt. sub marine. She demanded a joint naval demonstration against Spain by Britain, France, Germany, and Italy. No one believed this version of the mysterious incident and both France and Britain politely refused the Fascist' request for a joint naval demonstration against Spain. Enraged at this fresh frustration of their devilish schemes, Germany and Italy withdrew their naval units from the control scheme. The gap was promptly filled up by units of the French and British navies, who warned Germany that they would prevent any reprisals with which the Reich threatened Spain.

This was followed by the sinking of British, French, Greek and Russian merchant vessels by Italian submarines. The Mediterranean became unsafe for the mercantile marines of Europe. Again British diplomacy set to work. Attempts were made to negotiate and barter with Italy and Germany. In return for the recognition of Italian conquest of Abyssinia Italy was asked to guarantee safety in the Mediterranean to merchantmen along international commercial routes. A four-power pact between Britain, France, Germany and Italy, as a counter to the Franco-Soviet pact, was also suggested. Finally Britain even forced France to agree to the granting of belligerent rights to Franco and the Spanish Govt. if the non-Spanish combatants were first withdrawn from Spain. Each of these proposals, however, broke on the obstinate rock of Fascism which must have everything its own way.

Meanwhile "piracy" by the Italian submarines had continued, and both Britain and France were compelled to protect their shipping, and to take the necessary steps, if necessary, even without German and Italian cooperation. The Nyon Conference of Mediterrannean powers at which Spain was not invited and Germany and Italy refused to cooperate, was the outcome. It concluded its deliberations by the middle of September, and decided to put an end to the piratical attacks on merchant vessels in the mediterranean by every possible means. All attacks, whether by submarines, surface vessels, or aeroplanes were to be resisted and replied to by patroling unit of the various navies. For this purpose the mediterranean was divided into two zones; that to the East of Malta to be ptarolled by the naval unit of the nearest coastal power, while that to the West of Malta to be patrolled jointly by the French and British navies. Russia was thus excluded from the patrol scheme, which was moreover not to apply to any Spanish vessels!

In this unequal fight between the Spanish people on the one hand and Italian and German Fascism, on the other, where British diplomacy has always prevailed upon France to join it in measures which have effectively

helped the fascists in crushing the Spanish people, what are the chances of the final victory of the Spanish people?

"This year of struggle opens before our people the prospect of victory, which will not be easy but will be won in great battles which have now begun on the central front, which demand the most ardent enthusiasm, the greatest sacrifices, the iron, determined will to fight in the trenches of liberty, as well as on the front of production, and even to sacrifice our lives, if we are to ensure victory over criminal fascism! Appeal of the Communist Party of Spain on the first anniversary of the civil War.

"The first year of warfare has changed the slogan of the Spanish people from "No Pasaran!" (They Shall not pass!) into "Pasaremos!" (We shall pass!). The Spanish people are imbued with the will to victory".

Appeal of the Spanish People's Front on the anniversary of the civil War.

There are two factors ensuring the final victory of the Spanish people against the heaviest odds, against the combined forces of International Fascism, against the intrigues of the Trotskyist P.O.U.M. in Spain, against the pro-fascist policy and actions of Britain and, led and guided by Britain those of France. The first factor is the determination, valour and united will to win of the Spanish people themselves; the second factor is the international solidarity of all toilers and lovers of freedom and democracy, their sympathy and active help for a cause which is just as much theirs as that of the Spanish people. Let us first see how far the Spanish people have themselves travelled along the road to victory, and what they have achieved so far.

On May 24th, this year, the cumbersome and hesitant Caballero Govt. in Spain was replaced by the new, more determined, united and defined Govt. under Senor Negrin. The main plank in the platform of this new Govt is "to win the war" whereas the old Caballero Govt. was dissipating itself in utopian schemes and neglecting the immediate. The new Govt. is out to achieve firstly a single, all-powerful central executive authority, secondly a regular disciplined army under a unified command, thirdly a purge and clean up of the military apparatus, and fourthly the re-establishment of order in the hinterland, respect for small-scale property and a progressive agrarian policy.

The new Govt. was set up without the support of the two big Trade Union Federations the U. G. T. and the C. N. T., because their Executive Committees declared, inspite of the wishes of the maiority of their members, that they would only support a Govt. led by Caballero, and in which he was also minister for war! A few months of the new regime, however, have convinced the trade unionists of their error, and they are now eager to co-operate with the new Govt. in all spheres.

For the first time since the civil War, the Negrin Govt. is in full and absolute control of all wireless stations in loyal Spain, and the sole authority for maintaining public order. Various armed groups in Catalonia, let by independent organisations have all since been disbanded. A unified Army Command has been ensured by the setting up of a Central General Staff. An attempt has been made to place all industries on a war footing.

Ever since the beginning of civil War in Spain, the Trotskyist organisation, P. O. U. M. has been spying on and sabotaging the people's defence on behalf of the fascists. They have intrigued to split up the united front of the people. On May 1st. the P. O. U. M. hiding its disruptive aims behind Revolutionary' phrases, declared in a manifesto, "We shall continue to keep watch in the coming days, for we can

no longer tolerate the vacillating policy of the Govt. of Valencia and of the Generalitad, who are working against the working class." 'La Batalla,' the organ of the Barcelona Trotskyists wrote on may 1st., "There are tanks rifles aircraft and money in plenty, but they are not given to the revolu tionary proletariat which is fighting on the Aragon Front. And the reason why they are not given to us is because we are revolutionary workers, because we do not consider ourselves as simple soldiers of a colourless army, but as fighters in the military revolutionary front." And again on May 2. ,La Batalla' wrote, "We entirely agree with one of the anarchist groups, the 'Freinds of Durrutti' group, which is today engaged in a struggle against the leaders of the C. N. T. in the Govt., and has published the following slogan: All power to the Working class! All economic power to the Trade Unions! Against the Generalitad of Barcelona *we set up the Revolutionary Junta!*" and again, "an agreement has been concluded between our party, the P. O. U. M. and the Anarchists."

At last on May 5th Trotskyists succeeded in instigating riots in Barcelona, when the General Secratary of the U. G. T. of Catalonia and several workers were killed by irresponsible armed groups led by the P. O. U. M. On the disturbance La Batalla wrote, "Thousands of toilers went into the street, weapons in hand. The factories and workshops ceased work. Barricades of freedom sprang up in all parts of the town."

After the May events the Exucutive Committee of the P. O. U. M. in a resolution approved of this counter-revolutionary action and issued fresh instructions for continuing the struggle against the Peoples Front Govt. A confidential circular dated 11th. May, stated that, "The armed struggle of the Catalonian masses has smashed the Peoples Front." But the Peoples Front is stronger than ever in Spain today.

One of the first acts of the Negrin Govt. was to suppress the P. O. U. M. organ, 'La Batalla'. Trotskyist organi sations were rigorously suppressed and no less than 300 spies, agents of the P. O. U. M., Hitler and Missolini were arrested. Today the whole of loyal Spain is one single united nation which has launched a determined offensive on all fronts against the fascist hordes with the help of an organised, unified and disciplined army. Thus giving the most effective answer to Trotskyite disruption and treason.

How does the struggle in Spain concern other people all over the world? How does it affect us here in India? What is the basis of this World-wide sympathy and international solidarity of the people of the world with the people of Spain?

"The experiences of many years have shown that no powers of persuation are capable of calling a halt to the fascist war incendiaries. There exists only one efficient means of checking them: that is the united unceasing struggle of the masses of the people against fascists in the iddividual countries, and on an international scale. Only a united action of the international proletariat, gathering round it all sections of the workers, all progressive democratic elements, all true supporters of peace, is capable of curbing the fascist highwaymen, who are becoming over-confident, and of burying for ever their plans of spoilation."

G. Dimitrov. General Secretary, Communist International. "This Struggle between democratic progress and fascist reaction is of great consequence to the future of the world and will effect the future of Imperialism and India. The Congress has noted without surprise that in this strugggle the policy of non-intervention followed by the British Govt. has been such as to hamper in many ways the Spanish Govt. and people in fighting the fascist rebels and has thus in effct aided these rebels who are being openly

backed and helped by the fascist powers".

Inter National Congress Resolution on Spain, December, 1936.

"This war is being fought not only for the life of the Spanish nation, but also for the oppressed nations of the world because the Spanish Govt. is fighting German and Italian fascism which with their Spanish henchmen, are destroying the culture and civilisation, and the human justice of the world."

Mao Tze Tung, Chairman, Chinese Soviet Government May '37 "In Spain today we have some indication of the horror that might overtake the world on a much larger scale. There a peacefully elected democratic Government representing the progressive elements was suddenly attacked by the rebel groups with the aid of a mercenary army from abroad. And these rebels have recieved comfort and material aid from fascist countries, and there has been no lack of sympathy for them even in Britain. Those who talk so loudly of Law and Order in India do not hesitate to support the rebels against the Govt. in Spain. That Govt. was not even socialistic; it was a liberal democratic regime, But because it was progressive it was disliked by the reac tionaries everywhere, and in Spain today we see the determined attack of fascist forces against a rising democracy. That is a lesson for us all, and that in miniature shows us the state of the world today."

Jawaharlal Nehru, president, Indian National Congress. "You are the vanguards of the international proletariat in the fight against fascism. Your war is not only for the liberation of the Spanish people; it is also fought for people of the world. Your victory is our victory because we have a common enemy...international fascism."...Chu Teh, commander-in-chief of the Chinese people's Anti-Japanese Red Army, in his message to the Spanish people. "In Spain the world civilisation is being menaced and trampled under foot. Against the democratic government of the Spanish people, Franco has raised the standard of revolt. International fascism is pouring men and money in aid of the rebels. Moors and foreign legionaries are sweeping over the beautiful plains of Spain, trailing behind them death hunger and desolation.

The devastating ride of International Fascism must be checked. In Spain this inhuman recrudescence of obscurantism, of racial prejudice, of rapine and glorification of war must be given the final rebuff. Civilisation must be saved from its being swamped by barbarism. At this hour of the supreme trial and suffering of the Spanish people, I appeal to the conscience of humanity."

Rabindranath Tagore.

"Humaniiy! Humanity! The appeal is to you. The appeal is to you, men of Europe and America. Come to the help of Spain Come to our help! Come to your own help! For it is you, it is all of us who are menaced.

Quick! Quicker still! Rise, speak, cry out, act! If we are not able to stop the war, let us compel respect for the rules which international convention impose. Let us save the helpless and innocent! May a common impulse, above all divisions of race, party or religion, unite the peoples and rouse them to hasten to the aid of the victims. It is in the very midst of the fury of war that the brotherhood of all sufferers, of all the living must be affirmed".

M. Romain Rolland.

Hitler and Mussolini have combined to shout to the world, "Give us a free hand in Spain, or else there will be at least a European, if not a world-wide, war". The governments of Britain and France are afraid to take decisive steps against this fascist aggression. They do not want to see the victory of a People's Spain which will be the victory of the forces of democracy and

socialism. The new British plan for ''isolating'' the Spanish conflict is only another capitulation to the fascist murderers of Spain's liberty. The fascist aggression against Spain would have no chance of victory against a United Front of democratic States, for reasons well known, cringe before Hitler and Mussolini.

The international proletariat has taken the initiative in bringing together the Labour and Socialist and Trade Union organisations of the world for a plan of joint action in the cause of Spain. Dimitrov, on behalf of the Communist International, submitted on June 26 the following three demands for united action, which have since been considered and accepted by the various Labour and Socialist organisations: (1) Withdrawal of fascist interventionist troops, and recognition of the international rights of the Spanish Govt. (2) The League of Nations to apply the Covenant against the aggressors in Spain, and (3) The international proletariat to do everything in its power and to mobilise world opinion to bring about the quickest liquidation of the criminal war against the Spanish people.

The workers of the Soviet Union, through their trade union and other organisations, have been foremost in rendering help to the Shanish people. Prevented by the non-intervention convention from sending arms and ammunition to the Spanish people. they trans—shipped machinery wholesale to Spain for the creation of factories, and today the Spanish Govt. has got its own arms factories to manufacture arms. and munition. Unable to send arms the the Soviet workers sent factories to the Spanish people! The Soviet Govt. has been exerting all the diplomatic pressure at its command on behalf of the Spanish Govt., exposing the farce of non-intervention, tearing the veil from the interventionist crimes of Hitler and Mussolini.

Workers, peasants, peace-loving people from every land in the world have not only sent ardent messages of sympathy to the Spanish people, but active material help as a practical proof of their solidarity with them.

In this hour of need and trial of the international proletariat let not India lag behind. There are a hundred odd Indians fighting in the ranks of the Spanish Govt. We have held Spain Days, raised funds for medical units for Spain. But this is not enough. We must redouble our efforts. Let us raise our voices in joining the world protest against fascism. Let every labour and socialist organisation in India organise protest meetings and pass resolutions of solidarity with the international proletariat in the Spanish conflict. Let mass demonstrations and public meetings be arranged all over the country, at which the leaders should explain the Spain issue and its direct relation with India and the whole world. Let money, clothing and medical supplies be collected and sent to the Spanish people. India has recently subscribed for an ambulance for the Spanish people. Let us make up our minds today to subscribe for a hundred ambulances before the year is over. With the toilers of the whole world we in India must stand shoulder to shoulder and forge a strong link in this chain. Ours must not be the weakest, but one of the strongest links.

CHINA THE SPAIN OF THE ORIENT

By Arjun Arora.

Sunday, September 26th, was observed all over the country as "All-India China Day". Workers, peasants, students, radical intellectuals, and all lovers of freedom in India joined world-wide protest against the brutal aggression of Japanese fascism on Chinese soil. British Imperialism, ever alert to safeguard its own interests, had begun to draft Indian soldiers into China. An infantry battalion of 660 men, with a retenue of 72 followers had already sailed for Hongkong, with the consent and blessings, it was reported, of Messers Bhulabhai Desai and Satyamurthi. But the people of India in their thousands, in monster demonstrations and public meetings, condemned on the 26th September the sending of Indian troops to China without their consent. Not a pie of Indian money, they said, and not a son of Indian soil should go out to help the cause of Imperialism! India will no longer fight the battles of Imperialism. The 'War Danger' Resolution of the Faizpur Congress was loudly repeated and explained to the people from every street corner.

Jawaharlal Nehru, President of the Indian National Congress, in a statement calling upon the people to observe the All-India China Day, said:

"The war in China goes undeclared in the approved modern way but nevertheless ruthless and accompanied by slaughter of thousands of human beings. Japanese aggression continues and the League of Nations originally founded to protect the rights of the peoples and prevent aggression has become so helpless and impotent that it dared not even discuss the urgent problems of the day, much less take decisions on them.

Britain is an indirect ally of Fascism because it does not protest and does not do anything to prevent catastrophes such as these."

The bloody seed of fascism is bearing in China. Armed with the deadliest of weapons Japanese soldiers are pouring into the country. Even before the big battles start, in the preliminary skirmishes and raids, thousands of Chinese men, women and children have been bombed and blown to smi thereens.

Meanwhile Hitler and Mussolini have both increased their activity in Spain. Large numbers of Italian troops have arrived on the Madrid front, and Hamburg harbour is bristling with feverish activity loading enormous material for "Chemical" warfare. It looks as if the long-threatened Poison-gas warfare is about to become a reality in Spain, increasing the horrors of the struggle a hundredfold.

Who is responsible for all these developments? It is primarily the democratic governments with their conniving attitude towards the fascist aggressors. And the democratic governments are able to carry out this policy, of betrayal of democracy and encouragement to the warmongers, only because they do not meet with any effective resistence in their own countries, only because they are always sure of the tolerant indulgence and support of the 'labour' and socialist leaders.

But gradually the more astute of the

bourgeoisie themselves are becoming aware of the danger that threatens them with the rest of mankind. Sometime back the well known French journalist, Pertinax, in a leading article to the English periodical, "The Fortnightly Review" sharply criticised the British policy in regard to Spain. He unmasked the whole swindle of "non-intervention", and severely condemned the policy of cowardly capitulation to the fascist aggressors, which France and especially England, have been following for some years He wrote:—

"But the repercussions of the Spanish developments has spread for beyond the Mediterranean world. We have described at length the falling off of the League of Nations, the dissolution of the Little Entents, the wobbling of Belgium, the secession of Poland, the propagation everywhere of a spirit of reserve and neutrality. The French and British Governments have been put to the test in the Abyssinian war and of the destruction of the Locarno treaty, and they have conspicuously failed to stand it. Once more they are on trial and, this time, Spain, near the centre of their national and imperial interests. If they do not give a more satisfactory account of themselves than on the two former occasions, if the fascist gamblers score once again, the tables will be finally turned against the Western Powers. The hesitancy of their associates or sympathisers may then be altered to a conviction that the political and territorial European order created in 1919 is done for and that it is not enough for them to have looked to the German and Italian camp for a reinsurance of some sort, which they have been doing of recent years. They will no longer think it safe to sit on the fence. They may be carried along in the general stampede."

This article was written before the situation in China came to a head. In China today the democratic powers, this time in conjunction with the United States, are again trying to play the same despicable game which they have been playing in Spain, by drawing in Japan's fascist allies as" arbitrators" and helping the Japanese robbers to subjugate the Chinese people.

If they succeed in this, it will encourage the fascist war-mongers to such an extent that the next stage of their criminal policy is bound to lead them to the unleashing of a new world slaughter.

The hour has at last struck when powerful action must be taken by the peoples of the whole world against the war incendiaries; action which will go beyond solemn declarations and lip-service to principles; action which will develop the necessary force to check fascist intervention in Spain and the activities of the Japanese military clique in china.

"the tremendous forces and resources of the international labour movement should be united and directed towards an effective and unswering struggle against fascism and war." Dimitrov.

We have emphasised above that certain far-sighted bourgeois circles are becoming more and more aware of the danger that threatens them from Spain. This has already had its effect on the general political situation in Europe. The piratical activities of franco and bandit associates have speeded up this development, The Nyon Conference successfully concluded its deliberations inspite of the open hostility of Italy and Germany. From across the Atlantic such prominent statesmen as President Roosevelt, Senator Borah and Mr. Cordell Hull have stated publicly in plain unequivocal terms that they can no longer tolerate the growing menace and aggression of fascim which if not checked in time, would lead to a world war in which the U. S. A. was bound to be involved.

It is the irony of history that in demanding that the machinations of

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fascist aggression should no longer be tolerated, humanity can appeal not to the kind hearts of the non-fascist bourgeoisie, but to their defence of their material interests.

The other remarkable feature of fascism is this that today the fascist rulers' just for war and political adventure is in inverse ratio to the internal solidarity and strength of their own regimes. At home they are in the grip of the most severe difficulties. It is only the lack of powerful united action on the part of inter national labour that is keeping them on their feet. They will be swept the moment the masses in the non-fascist countries are able to exert united pressure through their governments on the fascists.

Dimitrov has shown the way to such a successful united action. After the conference of the delegates of the second and third Internationals at Annemasse, he proposed a programme of action which, if carried out, would be assured of the greatest success. He proposed.

(I) The international Labour organi sations jointly to address the Parliaments and Governments of all non-fascist States, primarily Great Britain, France, the United States and the Soviet Union, with the demand that they shall undertake urgent joint measures for the immediate recall of the Italian and German interventionist forces from Spain; for the lifting of the blockade onSpanish Republic, and for the recognition of all the international rights of the constitutional Spanish Government.

(2) The international Labour organisations to address together the League of Nations with the demand for the application of the Covenant against the aggressors who have attacked Spain.

(3) Simultaneously to address jointly the working class of all countries and world opinion with the call to do everything in their power in order to realise these demands and also not to allow any new acts of aggression on the part of the interventionists and to bring about the quickest liquidation of the criminal war against the Spanish people.

We recall these points not only because today they are just as important as they were then, but because, together with the defence of the heroic Chinese people, supplemented by the measures of further struggle which the inter-national organisations may propose they must become tomorrow the programme of action for toilers of all lands.

For this is the way, the only way, to save mankind from a new world slaughter. This is the way which the international labour movement must travel without delay.

THE MADRAS PEASANTRY ITS CONDITION AND PLATFORM OF STRUGGLE

By P. Sunderayya.

Before going into the question of the demands on which the masses are to be organised, it is necessary to consider the condition of the peasantry, the working class and other section of the people. The problem of the peasantry is a more complicated and as it varies from district to district and from village to village and there are various sections of the peasantry some of which have sometimes mutually conflicting interests. But still there are certain features which are more or less common to all sections and for all places and after going into the various questions pertaining to the peasantry in all the three provinces, a general scheme of the demands was formulated. The existing organisation of the toilers, and also of the rich peasantry were taken into account, and on the basis of these a scheme has been drawn up for the organisation of the peasant masses.

The Peasantry in Tamil Nad.

The condition of the peasantry in this province is one of the most wretched. There is a small percentage of rich landlords, which is about 10% of the agricultural population. About 10% of the agricultural population, does not cultivate the land themselves but

lease out the land at extortionate rates from the actual cultivators. Then we have the middle and lower peasantry, comprising about 40% of the agricultural population, who are proprietors of their own land and till it themselves and sometimes engage extra hands. A considerable percentage of this class also lease out the land from other non-cultivating landowners, owing to their own proprietory lands being too small to form into cultivable units. The rest of the agricultural population, about 40%, are landless agricultural labourers. They find work generally during the cultivating season and for the rest of the year somehow eke out a livelihood. The percentage given above are only approximate; but I believe that the variations, if any cannot be much.

Organisations.

In Trichy and Tanjore, there is an organisation of the mirasdars, i e. the landholders which has been carrying on an agitation in the interest of landlords. But its activities have been confined to holding a number of occasional conferences and passing a few resolutions. Its secretary, Mr.Mahadeva Iyer of Mudikondan, has been making some noise by publishing and circulating some memorials to the Governors, and legislators on the question of excessive Land Revenue demand of the Government in the Tanjore Districts. The main demands of this organisation are the reduction of the Land Revenue by 33 1/3, % reduction in the enhanced water cess leived in the Tanjore District as a result of the completion of the Mettur Project and protection to the local rice by the imposition of import duty on foreign rice. Laterly, their demand for protection has been partially met by the central Government, which imposed a duty on imported broken rice.

There is also an organisation in the Chingleput District, the Chingleput Landholders' Asoociation. This again is not very active, except receiving Government dignitaries and explaining to them their minor irrigation difficulties in the areas comprising the bed of the palar river and requesting partial or complete remission of the Revenue demand owing to failure of crops etc.

The poorer peasants and the agricultural labourers have no organisation at all except the Ryots Association in the Sivaganga Zamindary in Ramnad Dist. This organisation was active a few years back and carried on an intensive agitation for reduction of rents and refusal to pay the rent unless reduced. The association seems to have partially succeeded in its efforts, but after that we hear nothing of this association.

Kerala.

The condition of the peasantry in Kerala has been so bad that ever since the year 1858, the lower sections of the Malabar peasantry have again and again risen in revolts against their intolerable conditions. the latest of such peasant revolts being that which is known as the Moppla Rebellion of 1921. The Nambudris, apart from being the owners of large tracts of land, have a hold on the population by virtue of their being the religious heads. The peasantry of Malabar can be classified under the following heads:

Landless agricultural Labourers	45%
Cultivating Tenants, extent of holding being about 10 acres	35%
Non-cultivating landlords, known as jemmies, and possessing 80% of all the lands in Kerala.	5%
Owner cultivators	6%
Non-cultivating tenants (professional classes, Vakils, Clerks. etc.,)	9%

It may be noted that the entire land in kerala is owned by only 11% of the agricultural population and out of this 11% five percent own as much as 80% of the land.

About 10% of the tenants comprises of the Kanamdars, who pay the landlord a certain sum at the commencement of the tenancy agreement, which

is good for a period of 12 years, the amount so advanced being termed "Kanam". They enjoy certain privileges denied to the other tenants. They pay only a third of the rent usually paid by the non-kanamdars in addition to the Government's Revenue Demand. If the man is evicted, the kanam amount is paid back. According to the latest legislation, no eviction can be made unless the owner wants the land for his own personal use. Generally the kanamdar renews the tenency at the end of the 12 year period and the latest tenancy legislation has fixed the fees at 2-1/4 times and the difference the annual income from the land and rent and revenue prior to the legislation. The renewal was left to the will of the landlord but this legislation has given some measure of security to the kanamdar.

History of Agitation.

Till 1900 the peasantry in Kerala had no protection whatsoever. In 1900 the Tenant Improvement bill was passed, by which the tenant, if evicted, had to be paid by the landlord the value of the improvements made to the land during the period of occupancy of the tenant.

In 1917-18 agitation was started by a group of Kanamdars led by Sir N. Krishanan Nair, to get occupancy rights for the kanamdars. As a result of this the Legislature passed a bill but the Governor vetoed it on the ground that it was of an expropriatory nature. This bill, however, left the non-kanamdars who form the bulk of the peasantry out of its scope. One good, however, resulted from this. The hither to unhampered power of the landlords, (who had power over the temporal as well as the spiritual welfare of the bulk of the Hindu masses) was successfully challenged for the first time after centuries of unbridled oppression. The agitation continued and in 1927-28, the Malabar tenancy Act was passed in spite of the powerful opposition of the Jemmies (Zamindars) who at this time were ready to grant fixity of tenure to non-kanamdars. The act gave fixity of tenure to all tenants but to this day the Act remains a dead letter, as the non-kanamdars who are more than 95% of the tenants, have to pay one years rent before getting the right, which they are unable to pay on account of the poverty. Another section of this Act makes provision for Fixing the amount of fair rent, according to which fair rent is fixed at 2/3rd the net produce, which again is fixed at gross produce minus two and a half time the seed. But this comes into force only after 1942!

The condition of the peasantry in the Native states of Cochin and Travancore is worse still. Non-kanamdar tenants have no occupancy rights whatever.

Peasant Organisations.

So far there has been no effective organisation of the peasantry. Organising Committees have been set up in Four Taluks. A number of conferences have been held during the last few years and the main demands put forth in these conferences are (1) Security of Tenure without any hindrance (2) fixing of Fair Rent at half the net produce (3) Free renewals of Tenure to the Kanamdars and (4) Substantial reduction in Debts.

Andhra.

In this Province, as in Tamil Nad both the systems of tenure viz, zamindari and Ryotwari, exist. In the Districts of Vizag, East Godavary, Krishna and Nellore, large tracts of land are under the control of the Zamindars and the rest are Ryotwari areas.

Large Portions of Zamindari areas are not irrigated and agriculture in these areas is mainly dependant upon rains and tank water, which are generally not properly maintained or repaired. The cattle are not allowed to graze in the forests and the grass fields. The proportion of the rich peasantry is less

in Zamindari areas than in Ryotwari areas.

The peasants can be classified as under:—

Agricultural Labourers	50%
Cultivating land holders and tenants	45%
Rich Peasants	3%
Zamindars who lease their lands	2%

Organisations.

This is the only province in the presidency of Madras where the peasants are organised to some extent. There are District Peasants organisations functioning in the districts of East and west Godavari, Krishna, Guntur and Vizag. The paying membership of the Krishna organi sation is about five thousand. (annual subscription of annas Two) The membership in west Godavari is about 1500. and in East Godavari about 500. In Vizag the organisation is making headway.

The demands on which the peasants in these districts are organised centre round (1) Reduction of Revenue and Debt by 50%. (zamindari tenants to be brought up to the same position as Ryotwari land-holder) They also demand that the present system of Land revenue be replaced by a system of steeply graded income tax. In Krishna district there is in addition a specific demand by which the inclusion fee which is an amount paid when dry land is converted into wet land, is sought to be abolished.

This brief survey of the peasant population in the three provinces reveals some common features obtaining among the various strata of the peasantry in all the three provinces, such as the question of debts, revenue etc., Hence the organisation of the peasantry can be taken up on the basis of the specific and immediate demands of the peasantry enumerated below.

Debts

1. Immediate declaration of Moratorium until suitable legislation is passed and brought into force, such moratorium to apply to the pending cases also. Arrests for non payment of debts should cease. Reduction in the value of the debts in proportion to the fall in prices of primary commodities. The Government should take over all such reduced debts and should recover the same from the peasants in 40 equal annual instalments at rates of interest not exceeding 3% per annum.

(2) Complete repudiation of debts where the debtor has already paid double the amount he borrowed either by way of interest or capital or both. (interest on the existing debts to be calculated at not more than 6% per annum).

II. Rent and Revenue.

(1) Cancellation of all rent and revenue outstanding for over a year.

(2) The basis of the land Revenue to be completely changed and the income from the land to form the basis of taxation. Incomes below Rs 250/- should not be taxed. In the case of rents of the tenants, it should not exceed 50% of the net produce, without prejudice to existing rents wherever they are lower.

(3) A mixed commission consisting of equal representatives of the peasant organisations and the Government should be appointed once in ten years to fix the average net produce.

(4) Incomes between 250 and 500 to be taxed at 25% of the net income. Between 500 and 1000/- to be taxed at 25% of the net produce and so on the system of gradation going up to 75% of the net income where the net annual income reachs 40,000/—. This income tax shall apply also to the incomes of the Zamindars. Imprisonment for Civil debts should be abolished.

(5) Water cess should not exceed 4% of the profits on the Capital outlay.

(6) Licensing of Money lenders and penalising those that charge more than 6% interest.

(7) Abolition and penalisation of all feudal and customary dues and levies.

(8) Forests to be handed over to the Village Panchayats for administrative purposes for the common use of the villages up to distances of two miles.

(9) In the Government owned Reserve forests, impounding charges to be reduced by 50% and adequate provision to be made for grazing grounds wherever there are no forests.

Demands of Agricultural Labourers.

1. Minimum wage of Rs 10 p.m. or 6 annas per day.

2. Forty Eight hours week and Eight hour day.

3. One holiday in the week with pay.

4. Penalising conditions bordering on serfdom.

5. Abolition of interest in kind.

6. Short term loans at 6% interest through co-operative banks.

7. Government should build houses for the agricultural labourers and charge a nominal rent of 5% of a labourers income.

8. Three Fourths of the wages to be paid weekly instead of the half as is the custom in some places.

9. Unemployment and old age pensions to the extent of half their earnings.

10. Abolition of all existing debts.

With the enumeration of the above demands, the question arises as to who should be included in a peasants' organisation, whether the limit should be fixed at a certain acreage, whether to include all the peasants, i.e., all those people that cultivate or work on land either by themselves or through wage-labourers, the land being their own or leased. This would of course not include the absentee landlords who should be kept out of any peasants organisation. There should be no difficulty, if we do not make a limit as to the acreage or incomes of the peasantry beyond which they lose their right to join such organisations, but admit all those who agree to stand by the demands mentioned above.

The other question that has to be tackled is whether the agricultural labourers are to be organised separately or an endeavour is to be made to bring them in a common organisation with the land owning peasantry. It may be noted that the agricultural labourers form about 45% of the total agri cultural population in the whole of the presidency. Their inclusion in the organisation of the other classes of the peasantry may not be conducive to the pushing forward of the demands of the agricultural labourers. If they are organised, the question arises, as to whether they should be affiliated to the A.I.K.C. or to the A.I.T.U.C. It will be found that the agricultural labourer has more problems in common with the lower sections of the other peasant masses than with the industrial town-labourers. It would be correct therefore to organise these two sections of the peasantry in separate organisations. But the people who work in the peasant organisations should see that those organisations accept the minimum demands of the agricultural labourers as formulated above, and this will not be very difficult since the percentage of the other classes that engage labourers will be found to be very small. Generally these are engaged by the richer landlords, who will not generally join these organisations, since the demands put forth herein affect them adversely. Similarly people working in the organisations of Agricultural Labourers should explain to the labourers that the realisation of their demands depends upon United Struggle against British Imperialism.

It will therefore be seen that the affiliation of the Agricultural Labour Organisations with the A.I.K.C. would help to develop mutual cooperation in a United Struggle against the Rich Landlord and British Imperialism.

STRUGGLE FOR CIVIL LIBERTIES IN MYSORE

By B. Srinivas Rao.

A well organised propaganda has earned for Mysore the name of a model State. Its cities are picturesque and its industrial schemes ambitious. The treatment of guests from without is lavish and princely and the impression they are made to gather is that the whole State flows with milkand honey. It is not my purpose here to minimise or underrate any of its grandiose achievements; but I only attempt to present here very briefly the other side of the medal.

This seemingly progressive State is ruled by one claimed by many distinguished Indians to be a venerable Rajarishi. But those who are at the helm of affairs have denied to the people of that unfortunate state the rightful enjoyment of their civil liberties, to a degree little realised by those outside its frontiers.

There is a Press Law, which hangs like the sword of Pamocles on the Press and the intelligence department forces are veritable sleuth-hounds that hunt down mercilessly all who say things unsavoury to the powers-that-be. The gag orders are ever ready at the official armoury effectively to prevent the expression of public opinion.

For some years past the Congress is for all intents and purposes strangled and the national tricolour flag banned. Ever since the sweeping success of the Congress in the adjoining British Indian provinces, the authorities naturally anxious about its reaction within their own territory have launched upon a vigorous campaign of repression. While Gandhiji and other leaders of the Congress visit the State for reasons of health or pleasure they are taken great care of by the State and they in their turn, by some mysterious process of reasoning choose to remain silent about the ban on the national flag and the strangle hold on Congress organisation and workers. All India leaders are effectively gaged under Section 144 Cr. P. C. from addressing public meetings, demonstrations and expression of public feeling are stifled by orders under the Police Regulation. Adjournment motions in the Council and Assembly are disallowed without even assigning reasons. Accredited representatives of the public are taunted as indulging in politics just to receive the applause of the press and the public. The municipal councillors of Bangalore and Mysore are severely warned if they raise their voice of protest. The Chief Secretary of Mysore at the quarterly meeting of the Civil Service Association on 27-7-37 is reported to have cavilled at the Congress Governments as "amateur ministers dealing with affairs about which they know very little". He concluded with the blatant affront that they in Mysore were fortunate in that they had no choice to make between a constitution which admits of ministers both to eat the cake and have it.

Thus protests have been made at various times and recently by the municipalities of Bangalore and Mysore, by adjournment motions in the Assembly and Council, by the Civil Liberties Union, The Peoples Federation, the Mass Awakeners' Union, Bangalore, by the youth Leagues through the Press and the platform but of no avail. Still the orders are promulgated.

Ever since 16-1-37 when Srimathi Kamaladevi inaugurated the Congress

election campaign, started an era of repression which has recently reached the climax, with the promulgation in Bangalore of order under Section 45 of the Mysore Police Regulation banning all public meetings and processions without obtaining licence for a period of six months. These orders have created vast and growing discontent which is slowly crystallising into a determination to offer satyagraha. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in his recent statement has emphasised the need for vigilant watchfulness in this respect and the undertaking of necessary action.

These orders under Sections 30 and 45 of the Police Regulation are not appealable and unless one defies the order there is no other way of testing their validity. Even the Dewan has admitted that. This aspect of the business makes it detestable to the core.

As the question of smashing the Federal scheme, even before it is put on its legs is a serious issue before the nation-it is the duty of all congressmen to think about the state of affairs in the 'model-state' and therefrom get an adequate impression of what really obtains in the other States with whom and over the head of their people we are asked to federate. Even a superficial reader of the papers would have observed that these gag orders and prosecutions have as their main objective the suppression of congress activities in the State whose only aim is to secure for the people representative government.

"Desire to popularise the establishment of Congress Committees."

"Organise Kisan movements"

"To popularise Congress resolutions."

These are samples of the various grounds on which gag orders of such a sweeping nature are promulgated. In one district the celebration of the Independence Day was banned just a month after the day, thus betraying the real intentions of the authorities i.e., crush the Congress out of existence in Mysore.

From 1st January to 2nd February 1937 14 gag orders were issued and a number of workers arrested. A Mysore hotel proprietor was prevented from allowing a meeting to take place in his hotel. National flags were removed from house-tops by the police.

Since 16-5-37 when the repression got a new lease of life there have been not less than 15 gag orders. The celebration of Tilak Day was prohibited in various places and a fresh ban on national flag issued.

Since the beginning of this year on sixteen occasions political workers were arrested in Mysore, Bangalore and Shimoga and almost invariably sentenced. Most of these are active office bearers of the Various Congress Committees. Assaulting in lock-ups, press searches and raids on premises are now common occurence.

In the orders served on Dr. N. S. Hardikar in May last are found the following two significant allegations:

"desire to popularise the establishment of local Congress Committees."

"the undermentioned persons *in sympathy with the Congress* and its activities intend to hold public meetings."

Thus it becomes a national duty for Congressmen to intensify the struggle for the immediate emancipation of the States people from the autocratic reign of terror that is fast becoming normal in these citadels of feudalism.

THE BOMBAY BUDGET

By

T. Godiwalla.

(T. Godiwalla is a young marxist intellectual and Secretary of the Bombay Presidency Students Federation.)

Proceedings in the Assembly practically monopolised the attention of all political parties and groups during August. On the 17th the Finance Minister presented the budget prepared by the ministry. As has aptly been said by some one 'the biggest surprise of the budget is that it contains no surprises'. The Finance Minister himself proudly declared that he was presenting 'a cautious and conservative budget!

It is not possible to analyse in this review the budget proposals in detail, but a few salient features may be mentioned.

There is to be no fresh taxation. This is quite in accordance with the assurance given by Mr. Kher, the Premier, to the impoverished businessmen of Bombay. Even money lenders who have for decades fattened on the starving peasantry and the workers, and whom even the Interim ministres had thought fit to tax to the moderate extent of Rs. 25/- per head per annum were not to be touched. Criticising this proposal of the interim ministers the Finance Minister said, "A hard working woman who could lend her paltry savings of a frugal lifetime to earn an interest of Rs25/- a year or even less, must pay Rs25/- to the tax gatherer because these champions of the poor (the interim ministers) had decided to levy the tax." That is, according to the congress ministry, all or the majority or at least a very large section of the professional moneylenders of the presidency consist of "hard-working women", whose capital consists of "paltry savings of a frugal life-time". The Pathan and the Marwadi moneylenders in the cities and the villages who pocket the major part of the earnings of the poor, seemed to have no existence. The real reason, suspected by many, of this solicitude for the moneylender on the part of the ministry was that the Marwadi moneylender, in many districts, helps the congress financially and so the ministry was unwilling to displease him. There is also the general disinclination on the part of the ministers to run counter to the vested interests. No wonder even the Times of India paid glowing tribute to the framers of the budget.

So, as far as assurances to the merchants, industrialists and other vested interests were concerned, the congress Cabinet more than fulfilled them. Even these sections themselves must have been pleasantly surprised at the 'caution and conservatism, of the erstwhile fire-eaters.

What about the solemn pledge given to the toiling millions in the Congress Election Manifesto, in the Faizpur resolutins and in the wardha programme the three basic documents which were to guide the Congress, whether in the Legislatures or outside? It is on this touch-stone that the budget as a constitution wrecking (as Mr. Nariman called it) and a mass-mobilising weapon, has got to be tested. Even the left critics of the budget have made the mistake of judging the merits and demerits of the budget not with reference to the Congress programme but with reference to the previous budgets. Such a standard is intrinsically wrong, The congress Cabinet must be not merely more progressive than the

previous cabinets, its programme as a programme for wrecking the Constitution must be fundamentally different from that of all other parties, however progressive, that seek to work the constitution. The difference between it and all other parties must be not merely one of degrees but of quality.

Judged from this standard the congress Budget consitutes no less than a betrayal, a violation of the solemn pledge given to the people, a shameful capitulation before vested interests. Its apologists...few except the Anglo-Indian press and the big bourgeoisie have the shamelessness to extol it plead that the framers had not sufficient time to redraw the budget and hence its short-comings. But it is not a question of time, not an injustice here and there, it is the whole spirit that permeates the budget, it is the very approach that is anti-Congress and anti-Revolutionary unless one is specifically told that it is a congress budget, one would not know it, so little different it is from the budgets prepared by the previous govts.

The total income expected is about 12 crores, the total expenditure slightly more resulting in a deficit of 17 lacs. There is a 'big' reduction of expenditure of ten lacs (i. e., less than 1%). Land revenue has been reduced by 5 lacs, grazing dues have been abolished causing a loss to the govt. of the 'huge' sum of 5 lacs and 5 lacs of arrears of rent have been remitted. *The items of income and expenditure otherwise remain the same as in the past years.*

The total land revenue that is paid by the agricultural classes of the province amounts to Rs 3 crores and 40 lakhs. The reduction of 5 lakhs in revenue thus means a reduction of 1.4 per cent. We find on closer analysis that even this paltry remission of 1 lac goes to benefit only one - and that the comparatively better - off section of the peasants. The landless proletariat that constitues by for the largest agricultural class - 30 lakhs - gets no benefit. The tenant cultivators who number over 12 lakhs get no benefit. Only the cultivating owners who number 9 lakhs and the non-cultivating owners who number 2 lakhs get a share in the remission.

Further comment is unnecessary. As comrade Indulal Yajnik said while presiding over the Belgaum Taluka Kisan Conf., 'even if we include all direct and indirect reliefs that the budget promises (supply of drinking water, development of cottage industries etc.) they do not to any substantial degree, afford the necessary relief to a population that pays a bill of seven and half crores out of a total revenue of 12 crores."

The Agrarian programme adopted by the congress at Faispur and in the wardha Platform include.

1. Substantial reduction in rent and revenue,

2. Substantial reduction in canal and other dues,

3. Exemption of uneconomic holdings from taxation,

4. Relief from the burden of rural debt and arrears of the rent and revenue. Moratorium on debts.

5. Fixity of tenure.

Let us now see how the Bombay Cabinet has carried out this programme.

1. Regarding reduction of revenue and rent the congress has not yet laid down any definite standard. The AICK, the TUC and many congress organisations have demanded 50%. reduction. Mahatma Gandhi in 1930 while presenting his famous 'eleven points' included the demand for a reduction of 50%. In Assam the non-Congress govt. announced a reduction of 25% in the land revenue. As opposed to this the Congress Party demanded a reduction of 50%. The Congress motion was defeated but an amendment of 33⅓% reduction was carried.

1. It is in the light of these facts

that the 'revolutionary' nature of the 1. 4.| per cent reduction in land revenue proposed by the Bombay congress govt. has to be judged.

2. No reduction has been made in irrigation charges.

3. The ultimate goal of exemption of uneconomic holdings has been announced but nothing has been done.

4. Regarding indebtedness, the most pressing problem of the peasantry, the Finance Member expressed his contempt for 'half-digested' measures and anounced that a committee of experts to investigate and advice the govt. would be appointed. Meanwhile there would be no moratorium presumably because the 'hard-working woman' who lends out of her "frugal savings of a life-time" would be harmed.

5. Legislation on the fixity of tenure has been postponed. The finance member promises to introduce it next year.

And this budget has been described by some shameless apologists of the cabinet as a "Peasant Budget".

Not only is it a mockery to compare the "Agrarian programme" of the Bombay ministry with the Agrarian programme of the National Congress re-iterated from a thousand platforms it also falls far short of what congress cabinets in other provinces have already done. Even non-congress govts. in some provinces have done better.

The Bombay cabinet has violated everyone of the assurances given to the peasants by the Congress. Comrade Indulal Yajnik was not wrong in saying that the Finance minister Mr. (ex-Diwan Bahadur) Lathe has not read the Election Manifesto and the congress Agrarian programme.

"The working class" as comrade Parulekar said, seems to have been altogether forgotten by the ministry. Nowhere in the budget speech the poverty of the working class and measures to remove them were dealt with-perhaps because it was a peasant budget!

"We on this side of the House are irrevocably committed to Prohibition" flamboyantly declared the Finance minister in his budget speech. The concrete Prohibition proposals are however, insignificant at least for this year. In three selected areas in Gujrāt, Maharastra and Carnatak and also in one selected industrial urban area, prohibition would be 'soon' introduced," as an experiment" The extent of the prohibition to be introduced in the present financial year can be gauged from the fact that the total loss to revenue would be 2 lakhs. The total revenue from excise is 320 lakhs. So that the Congress govt. will suffer a loss of slightly more than ½ per cent due to its "Prohibition Policy". However better results are promised in the next year. The ministry has given the assurance that complete prohibition would be introduced in 3 years.

The only other notable thing in the budget speech of the Finance minister was the assurance that the govt. intended to nationalise the utility services, but it was not announced when.

And that is all. Except vague promises of a good many things which it would be useless to deal with here.

To complete the picture of violation of the congress pledge another item of expenditure in the Budget-comprarativety small in amount but of great political significance ought to be mentioned. Pprovision was made in the budget "*for Election to the Federal Legislatures*". How this item could figure in a budget drawn up by congress ministers who in the words of Pandit Jawaharlal are pledged to "tear, burn, destroy and wreck the Federation", is beyond the comprehension of the average congressman. It is only one of the many indications of the present trend of the dominant Right wing that is determined to work the Constitution,

Can anyone wonder that Sir John Abercombe, leader of the 'Progressive Party' offered whole hearted support to the govt. on its budget proposals? Can anyone wonder that the Times of India went into raptures over the performance of the Finance Minister?

It is a pity that with the solitary exception of com. Parulakar there is not one among the Lefts in the Assembly outside the congress ranks with sufficient grasp over the facts and figures and debating ability to expose the hollowness of the budget proposals, its utter reactionary character and indict the cabinet for lowering the congress flag and betraying the people.

The Budget Debate.

The budget debate has been colorless except for a few speeches by com. Parulekar, who by a series of cut motions has xposed the worthlessness of the budget and challenged the ministry to defend its proposals in the light of the congress election manifesto.

Moving a token-cut in land revenue demand com. Parulekar drew the attention of the House to the plight of the agricultural proletariat. It is remarkable that though the agricultural labourers in the presidency number over 30 lakhs and this number is continually increasing, the budget makes absolutely no provision, for this class. He pleaded that at least part of the enormous arable land (30% of the cultivable soil) lying fallow should be given over to the landlesss labourers. At least 50 lakhs of acres of land are kept fallow only because the absentee landlords do not cultivate them. Should not the govt. let the agricultural labourers have this land? It was said that the cabinet had not the power to act in this way. Should not they who had accepted office not to work the Constitution but to expose its unworkability and wreck it, force a dead-lock on this issue if the governor intervenes and would they not thereby win over even the most backward sections of the rural masses?

The reply given by the Finance minister and his colleagues to these appeals were always apologetic, pleading for time. It is now an open secret that a number of congress legislators, particularly those coming from rural areas, are getting critical of the cabinet. It is significant that on the 26th of Aug, the revenue minister announced that govt. were considering the question of declaring a moratorium on indebtedness though no such measure had been even hinted at by the finance minister in his budget speech. There is no doubt that the rank and file resentment against the cabinet's policy is growing and the cabinet is also fully conscious of it. It is strongly rumoured that but for the declaration by the revenue minister there would have been revolt in the congress legislative party. From what has happened till now one can safely say that a good number of rank and file legislators can be influenced by radical forces and strong pressure on the cabinet from within can be organised.

OUR BOMBAY LETTER

The Cabinet and the Communist Internees:

The Govt. communique issued on August 1st was significant. It repeated almost word for word the notorious Madras Govt. Communique issued on the release of Kottapatam school prisoners wherein Mr. C. R's Govt. had declared its determination to fight the propagation of "Class-Hatred" and of "ideas involving the use of violence". Then came the non-release of Communist prisoners and non-lifting of ban on Communist internees and working class organisations. The Bombay Sentinel commenting editorially on the communique wrote "This statement coupled with the non-removal of Govt. bans on certain Communist institutions in the presidency leads one to believe that the Ministry is determined to carry on war against Communism and Labour which was started in the country some years ago and give no quarters whatever to Communist organisations.' Mr. N. M. Joshi, the Vice-president of the Civil Liberties Union sent a letter to the Home member along with the resolution demanding the immediate release of all political prisoners and internees and the lifting of ban from all anti-Imperialist organisations. He gave a list of the organisations and prisoners also.

The Hon'ble Minister Mr. Munshi replied that, "before anything could be done the Govt. had to consider each case thoroughly and then lay down its policy."

N. M. Joshi's letter and Mr. Munshi's reply both of which got good publicity in the press, came as a shock to even the staunchest supporters of the ministry. The question that was on everybody's lips was "Is this how the Congress ministers are going to carry out the Congress policy?" The Bombay Sentinel wrote, "One might suppose that Mr. Munshi has completely forgotten that the Congress is committed to a certain policy. The reply might as well have emanated from the chief secretary without the minister's intervention. Can the Bombay Ministry dare to keep men convicted for political offences under the old regime any longer in jail? Can they dare to continue to restrict the liberties of men who have been interned and otherwise penalised under special emergency powers without trial or charge? It must be said plainly and bluntly that if the ministers intend to monkey with the question of release of prisoners they will forfeit the sympathy of the Congress rank and file and the people at large," Even a strong pro-official Congress paper like the Chronicle mildly but unequivocally demanded the immediate release of working class leaders and removal of all restrictions on Civil liberties and in its Editorial of 4th August under the heading 'Release of Prisoners' it reminded the ministry that Comrades, Patkar, Despande and others were still under restrictions and that bans on the Young Workers' League, the Marxist League, the Red Flag GKU had not yet been lifted and expressed the hope that the Ministry would fulfill the pledges given to the people quickly. As days passed and the bans continued, even strongly pro—Congress papers assumed a sterner tone. The Bombay sentinel which has been in the forefront in its agitation for the winning of Civil liberties and Democratic Rights sharply condemned the ministry for its dilatory tactics. The Bombay Chronicle wrote "It may be taken for granted that the Bombay

Cabinet is fully alive to its duty as a Congress Cabinet to secure the removal of restrictions on Labour leaders. So long as you permit the incarceration of a single person under a repressive law you justify the existence of the Law. And that is about the last thing that can be expected of a Congress Cabinet". The volume of public opinion against the discriminating policy of the Ministry rapidly gained in strength.

On the 5th of August Comrades Joglekar and Patkar sent open letters to Pundit Jawaharlal, and the Bombay Govt. Comrade Patkar said in the course of his letter to Mr. Munshi:—

I appeal to you to immediately take steps to the declared policy of our great national organisation—the Congress. We look upon you not merely as the minister of the Govt. but as the people's representative in the Imperialist legislature, as a comrade in the common national struggle. In making this appeal I do not seek to conceal my views and aims. I am a communist by conviction...It is as an anti—Imperialist......that I make these demands.

In case my restrictions are not removed I would conclude that you are powerless because of the vindictive attitude of the Govt. towards working class prisoners and in protest against the policy of Imperialism I would defy the ban imposed on me by open and active participation in the national liberation movement."

In his letter to Pt. Jawaharlal Comrade Patkar sharply criticised the Bombay Ministry's working class policy which was threatening to split the National Front.

The Working Class:

The workers of the Kurla Swadeshi Mills went on strike because of the sudden decision of the management not to pay the bonus of/4/-not weekly but at the end of the month. It is difficult to see how the mill was going to gain by this new system. On the other hand it entailed additional hardships on the workers who were always short of cash. The management as a result of the protest of the workers agreed not to introduce the new system. But then they went back on their agreement, and the workers did not receive their bonus on the 1st week of August. They went on strike. The management declared a lock—out. Mass meetings attended by 1,500-2,000 were organised by the Red Flag GKU. Both the workers (through com. Jhabwala) and the owners approached the Labour Officer. He declared that he could do nothing till work was resumed. The workers refused to end the strike unconditionally.

As the management attempted to run the mill on the 11th, picketting had to be started. A meeting of the workers was held after efforts to run the mill had failed.

However a settlement was reached on 12th August, the most important terms of the settlement being that the old system of weekly bonus would continue; there would be no victimisation for participation in the strike. It was thus an almost complete victory for the workers.

On the 7th the Standard Mill management attempted to introduce a new system of rationalisation in the Spinning department whereby each worker would have to mind two sides instead of one. The workers refused to agree to this intensification of the work. The G. K. U. leaders carried on intensive agitation and exhorted the workers to refuse to be thus doubly exploited. A strike seemed imminent. The workers were ready for action. But at the last moment the employers gave way and agreed not to introduce the new system.

A big strike wave seems imminent These small skirmishes are bound to develop into a mighty strike struggle within a few months time, unless the

wages rise considerably. The workers are getting more and more confident. Congress ministry has helped in the creation of a an atmosphere of expectancy, which however, is mainly the result of the prosperity wave in the Textile industry.

On 3rd August, the Gokak strike which with some breaks, had continued for over seven months, came to an end. Mr. Gulzarilal Nanda who had been deputed by the Congress Cabinet to settle the strike, was recipient of praise from all quarters Congress, Anglo-Indian and even Trade Unionists. The labour policy of the Congress Cabinet seemed to have been vindicated.

The illusion however was short lived. The truth about the settlement was shocking. The fifty dismissed workers were left to the tender mercy of the bosses; compulsory arbitration in direct violation of the Congress Election Manifesto had been forced on the workers; the clerks had been prohibited from joining the union; recognition of the union had been made conditional upon its virtual repudia tion of class struggle. Not satisfied with enforcing this humiliation on the workers who had fought for over seven months, Mr. Gangadhar Rao Despande the veteran Congress leader of Karnatak, scolded the workers (in the presence of the European manager) for "begging alms" in the name of relief during the strike period, warned them never to go on strike again, and shouted "Malik-shahi-ki Jai". Here was the Labour policy of the Congress in all its nakedness.

At a meeting of the press workers union a committee consisting of leading Trade Unionists was formed to bring out a Volume of Marxist articles in memory of the late Comrade J. Adhikari,. Comrade Batliwala and Sane were elected the secretaries of the committee.

The Students & Youths:

There in Bombay at present are a number of youth organisations some distinctly communal, others nationalist. The Youth Association of which Comrade Batliwala is one of the secretaries is the most important of these. There is a progressive Youth League whose membership is purely nominal and which is a Royist body. There is the need in Bombay of a single broad, non-party but radically anti-Imperialist youth organisation and with the removal of the ban from the Nawjuvan Bharat Sabha and Youth League, the idea of restarting these organisations came in the minds of several who in the past were associated with these bodies. On Sunday August 8th, a meeting of the old Nawjuvan Sabha members and sympathisers was held. It was recognised by all that it would be harmful to start another paper organisation and that there should be one single Youth organisation in the city. A committee consisting of Comrade Godiwala, Upadhya, Dr. Chitnis, and two others was formed to approach the existing youth organisations with a view to form such a body. It is hoped that the Committee would finish its work speedily and take the necessary step. It is surprising how Dr. Chitnis could be in the committee. By no stretch of imagination and by no standard can he be described as a 'youth'. It is expected that the youth organisation would keep a definite age limit for its members.

As a result of the strong agitation carried on by the students' Union the Senate had decided to hold the Matriculation Examination twice a year. The exceptionally low percentage of successful candidates in the Matriculation Examination in '36 and 37' (average 20%) made this system essential, if a large number of poor students were not to lose their time and money for full one year for failure to obtain the requisite marks in any subject even by

a small margin. But for some inexplicable reason the governor of Bombay in his capacity as a chancellor vetoed this decision of the Senate. It is seldom that the chancellor intervenes in such internal matters of the University and this action came as a surprise to all. A mass meeting of the students was organised on 11th at Chowpatty to protest against the high-handed action. A procession marched to the Chowpatty sands, where with Mr. Horniman in the Chair, a very well attended meeting was held.

The Bombay Students'Union, though only three months old, is already looked upon by the large masses of students as their leader and organiser. Its membership has gone up to 500. The final figure of the collection made for Spain by the Students' Union is Rs 360.

United Front Movement.

The BPTUC took the initiative in convening a meeting of the representatives of all radical organisations in the city with the object of organising a mass demonstration on the 15th in support of the demands of the people as formulated in the Congress Election Manifesto and the Wardha resolution. Accordingly on the 5th of August the representatives of the BPTUC, the Kisan Propaganda Committee and the 'F' ward Congress Committe met. It was decided to organise a series of meetings during the week to popularise the People's demands as formulated by the Congress and it was also decided to take out on the 15th a procession from Lalbaug and to terminate in a mass meeting to be held at Chowpatty. A sub committee was formed to seek the coopera tion of the other organisations, and to draft resolutions. A series of meetings were organised all over the city during the week. The provincial NFTU and Presidency Students' Federation also joined hands with the afore said organisations. The CSP did not join, nor was it invited. Everyone knew that because of its hostility to the BPTUC, the CSP would not agree to have joint demonstrations with the working class and so it was thought useless to approach the CSP. Nor would participation of the CSP have made the demonstration any more successful, because the CSP in Bombay has hardly any following whether in the Congress, in the working class or among the students.

In the meetings which were held to popularise the 'Mass Demands Day' the Cawnpore firing was unequivocally Condemned as an act of betrayal by the Congress ministers, On the 9th a huge meeting was held at Madanpura under the presidentship of Comrade Sahid where the shameful Gokak Settlement, the Cawnpore firing, the non-release of working class prisoners and the Speakers' ruling against Comrade Parulekar's motion for adjournment to discuss the Wage Act were condemned. The speakers appealed to the Congress ministers to remain true to their pledge and warned them that otherwise they would lose all support.

What surprised people most was why Pt. Jawaharlal who had denounced the Huq Ministry for firing on Bengal workers and for non-releae of detenues, had nothing to say about the Cawnpore firing and about the discrimination made in Bombay with regard to communist internees and prisoners.

It was clear that it was not the Jawaharlal of a year ago, that he was attempting to defend a line with which he himself was in violent disagreement. The Bombay Sentinel in an Editorial under the heading 'Duty to criticise' wrote "while we fully agree with the Congress President that the hands of the ministers should be strengthened by Congressmen outside, we cannot subscribe to the extra-ordinary view that they must be free from cirticisms and attacks in the press. The sentiments are inconsisteut with his previous utterences. The Congress ministers are the creatures of the Congress and

the public and they cannot be allowed to become their own masters.

But what "unnecessary attack" was the Pundit referring to? No one can believe that he gave this warning 'abstractly' i. e-, without certain concrete cases of 'unnecessary criticism' being pointed out to him by the ministerial supporters.

One has not to guess hard. As the Se ntinel wrote "In this Presidency no criticism has been levelled against any of the Congress ministers yet, for their acts, either of commission or ommission except against Mr. Munshi, minister of Law and Order. While we welcomed Mr. Munsh i's prompt action in removing the ban on more than 290 associations in Bombay, we condemned him for discriminating against radical labour organisations and leaders.

"We ask the Congress President frankly whether even he could allow such discrimination to pass without criticism. It is quite possible that the activities of these Labour organisations may not ageee with the personal views of Mr. Munshi; but Congress ministers have very little or no chance in this. It is a matter of principle." The irresistible conclusion to which one is driven is that Jawaharlal did not want a strong condemnation of the ministers for their invidious discriminatory policy which was disrupting the united front. An astounding conclusion and almost incredible; but one cannot explain his aversion to criticism of Bombay Ministry in any other way.

On 12th a number of questions were put to Jawaharlal by congressmen and journalists in the Congress House. He was asked why he did not condemn the firing on the Cawnpore workers. Whether he justified the act; why the U. P. Congress ministry, wedded as it was, to the policy of non-violence, condoned the firing,

Jawaharlal's reply was that "even a pacifist Govt. was some times forced to resist foreign aggression. State was

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the coercive part of the Govt. There might be occasions when people, whether strikers or not indulged in violence, no Govt. could tolerate it..." (Bombay Chronicle 13-8-37.).

Replying to a question regarding the non-removal of bans on Labour leaders in the Bombay Presidency, the Congress President said that the ministry had several difficulties, especially the All-India Contacts that the Labour leaders had which were being enquired into." (Bombay Chronicle 13-8-37).

That even Pundit Jawaharlal could become an apologist of Imperialist violence on masses of workers and of the shameful discriminatory policy of the Bombay Congress Cabinet came as a surprise even to the Communists. None had imagined that Jawaharlal would treat the Cawnpore firing from the angle of abstract ethics of violence against counter - revolution in the same category as Imperialist violence against the toilers shocked his most ardent admirers. ("if he who thought violence to be vulgar, were to be in Spain today he would take up a gun and fight for the Spanish Govt." said Jawaharlal while replying to a question on firing on the workers in Cawnpore.)

On the whole Jawaharlal failed to evoke in the Bambay Public that enthusiasm which marked his visit in May '30. Then, every word uttered by him was a clarion call to struggle, a warning alike to imperialism to those who would compromise the national liberation struggle in any way. This time he appeared a tired man, struggl ing within himself, forcing himself to follow a line in which he had not the least faith, lacking confidence in himself, wanting to get rid of his office as President of the Congress as soon as possible.

On the 15th of August a mass meeting of the workers was held at Lalbaug and from there a procession was taken to Chowpatty where under the joint auspices of the B.P.T.U.C., the N.F.T.U., the Students' Federation, the Kisan Propaganda Committee a mammoth meeting was held. Loudspeakers had been installed and the gathering was unexpectedly big. Mr. N. M. Joshi was in the Chair. The meeting began with the singing of the Red Flag. Although the meeting had been convened to voice all the demands of the masses as formulated by the Congress and although a comprehensive resolution demanding a larger number of political and economic measures was passed, all the speakers spoke mainly against the discriminatory policy of the Bombay Govt. with regard to the working class and demanded the immediate removal of bans and restrictions on working class leaders and organisations. This was but natural because the release of Communist internees has become today the major demand of political Bombay; and all attention is focussed on Mr. Munshi the minister of Law and Order.

Com. Narayanaswami said, "I am here as a Congressman, as a representative of the 'F' ward Congress Committee. And exactly because I am a loyal Congressman I protest against the policy that is being pursued by the Cabinet".

The most characteristic feature of the U.F. movement that is developing in Bombay today is that it is growing under the direct impact of the working class movement that is rapidly gaining strength. The release of Communists is no longer a specifically workingclass issue. Already it has become the most important political issue and the workingclass demonstrations and processions are facilitating the rapid radicalisation in the broad non-proletarian masses.

IN VINDICATION OF COMRADE K. S. MANN.

(We have received the following letters which defends com. Mann against the slandering attacks. We have already in our editorial notes referred to this spy Mania, and have expressed our confidence in the integrity of com. Mann. Ed.

1. The Punjab occupies a place of honour in our anti-Imperialist hearts, it reminds us of heroic days—the Komagatamaru, Babhar Akalis, Jallianwalla, Kirti Kisan Party and Naujawan Bharat Sabha, Left has always been strong in the Punjab but today if the country looked to the Punjab for a model they would be sadly disap pointed. In every other province painstaking efforts are being made to unify the Left and make it the driving force behind the united national movement for our country's emancipation. In the Punjab the picture is different, rather than a united left or a left attempting to unify itself and overcome all obstacles in the way of unity we find the left forces at war with each other, weakening themselves and the national movement as a whole. The struggle of the left groups has reached a stage where it has become unscrupulous—factional passions are fanned, group loyalties evoked, mean and malicious propaganda against the protagonists of unity done to carry through disruptive plans and prevent unity. The latest instance is the virulent propaganda against Comrade K. S. Mann that he is a police agent. That the designing disrupters can sink so low is evidence of their own degradation and political bankruptcy.

We know comrade Mann and his associates, comrades Sohan Singh Josh, Harjab Singh and Katul Singh all members of the Punjab Legislative Assembly. We know and have been further assured that comrade Mann's personal and political integrity is above suspicion. Comrade Mann has been fighting his hardest to achieve Left Unity in the Punjab and the disrupters, who wanted their own factional dominance and to retain their own bureaucratic leadership, having no justifiable political arguments to advance against unity and finding that sabotage could not stem the tide of unity, and that the cadres of different groups were being drawn together through joint mass work took to the last weapon of political scoundrels-denouncing a political opponent as a spy.

It is a matter of profound regret to us that the Punjab CSP has lent its support to the slanderous campaign of these unscrupulous disrupters. We expect the CSP to fight rather than support the opponents of unity. The CSP is already the growing organisational expression of Left Unity and would it expand as it should or split as it must if it becomes a tool in the hands of a few unscrupulous disrupters. We earnestly entreat the entire Punjab Left to see the danger it is in, and we call upon the rank and file of the Punjab CSP and the National Executive of the CSP to save the fair name of the CSP from indelible disgrace.

Unstinted support to comrade Mann is not a partisan affair it is the duty of every sincere revolutionary and every decent man. Here is an honest man and a tireless fighter against Imperialism being called a spy. If work has to continue unhampered, this spy mania must go since it helps only to disrupt the left ranks, where unity at the moment is very urgent.

K. V. Narayan Rao. M. L. A. Bazwada & S. V. Ghate.

2. Comrade Bikramajit Singh, General Secretary of the Gujranwala Congress Socialist Party writes that at a general meeting held on the 11th instant, the Gujranwala C. S. P. passed the following resolution;—

"This general meeting of the C.S.P. is of the opinion that the decision of the Punjab C.S.P. against Com. K. S. Mann and the so—called disciplinary action taken by it against Com. Harjab Singh M. L. A., Sohan Singh Josh M. L. A. and Kabul Singh M. L. A. constitute a condemnable demonstration of petty partisan spirit. This meeting further expresses its full confidence in Com. Mann and as a protest against this policy of running down one after another sincere comrades, decides to disaffiliate itself from the Punjab C. S. P."

It may be noted that this is the third important party which has taken this step, the other two being Jhelum and Batala, which voted unanimously in favour of disaffiliation from the provincial party.

CORRESPONDENCE

Plea for left Unity

To
The Editor
Dear Comrade,

I take this opprtunity of approaching you with a definite proposal of restoring a United Front amongst the Left Wing forces working in India today. I hope you will give your best consideration to these humble suggestions of mine and let me have your opinion on these matters at an early date.

You are possibly well aware of the fact that the left wing forces in India are too much disrupted and divided. It is a great tragedy that this disruption should have ended in the utter failure of Mass revolutionary action. My own idea of bringing the left wing on a definite concrete programme is more for the purpose of preparing the masses for mass revolutionary action, than for any other purpose. I know very intimately from my long experience in the Trade Union movement the various left wing groups which are working in the country. I had the privilege to work with many of the leaders of the various left wing groups and I can honestly say that all of them have got the burning desire of preparing the masses for revolutionary mass action. Unfortunately the nomen-clatures under which they sail have created an artificial barrier. The left wing in India today is divided into groups such as the congress Socialist party, Royists, the Reds, the T. U. C. and Kisan groups. There are certain idea-logical differences between these groups but in my humble opinion the points of agreement far out number the points of disagreement. But unfortunately inspite of the agreement on major issues, there are sharp differences existing between these groups which make all chances of common action very remote. All these groups are now agreed that the Indian National Congress is the organisation within which a United front against Imperialism has to be strengthened and built up. There may have been some doubt about the attitude of the Reds regarding the Congress in th past. But the recent statement of the Reds regarding the C.S.P. published in the New Age September 1937, has removed the doubts. All these groups are agreed on the fundamental programme and

theory as ennunciated by Karl Marx· and Lenin. The immediate objective is also now admitted even by the Reds as "accomplishing the National Democratic Revolution". On these fundamentals all these groups i. e. C.S.P., Royists and Reds are agreed. The differences have arisen as regards the particular manner in which these objects are to be achieved. A stormy and most unfortunate controversy has been raging in the Press between Com. M. N. Roy and the C.S.P. as regards the open formation of the C.S.P. Having given my most careful consideration to all the objections raised by Com. M. N. Roy against the formation of the C.S.P. I still remain unconvinced that such a party today is not necessary in the Congress. The history of the Congress is replete with such parties. There was the Home Rule League of Lok-Manya Tilak, the Satyagraha Sabha of Mahatma Gandhi and the Swarajya Party of Dass and Nehru. Why should not the Socialists exercise the same right which Tilak, Gandhi and Dass exercised in the past? But I do not feel that any purpose is likely to be served so far as developing revolutionary Mass action is concerned by attacking the bonafides of those like M.N. Roy who do not believe in the formation of an open party but mainly agree on the immediate work that lies ahead of us. I still feel that it is possible to arrive at a workable compromise between the C.S.P. and the Royists with the object of intensifying the ant-imperialist fight carried on by the Congress.

The third group popularly known as the Reds has also recently adopted an attitude which has created hopes in me that it is possible to have a united front with this group too. After all it cannot be denied that the C.S.P. has played an important part in building up a genuine left wing inside the Congress. The discussions as to the Marxist nature of any group are futile and unnecessary. Nor is the faction work alleged to have been carried on by certain persons, likely to lead to the formation of a genuine Marxist revolutionary Party. After all the revolutionary role of a party or a group will be decided on the basis of the revolutionory mass struggle which it is able to encourage and lead by its work among the masses and not by the mere label of Marxism.

I, therefore, feel that the time has come when all the left wing forces in India should make a supreme effort to unite.

(Sd.) R. S. Ruikar.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

Constituent Assembly vulgarised :

The Congress stands for the Constituent Assembly (C. A.) and against the Slave Constitution. The Congress Ministers were commanded to put forward our demand of CA. They sucked all anti-imperialism out of it and made a prayer out of it to Imperialism. In all the speeches of the Congress Ministers CA was shorn of its anti - imperialist content and imported that of an All-Parties Conference, it was concieved of being convened within the frame work of Imperialism and for a compromise with it. In Behar CA resolution went a step further so as to satisfy the communaiist elements who had formed the "Interim Ministry" and the landlord elements who have always sided against us. The ground having been thus prepared in the Provincial Assemblies, the redoubtable Mr. Satyamurthi, and he is the Deputy - Leader of the Congress Party there, carried forward this campaign of vulgarisation through the Central Assembly. He moved there a resolution that the existing Constitution "*Should be replaced* by a constitution framed by the Constituent Assembly". So, do we plead for a CA? Or we fight for it and mean to convene it? In his speech he, acting as the spokesman of the Congress, he made himself clear thus, "In relying on the Indian Princes the Govt. were relying on a broken reed. The Govt. should accept the resolution also in view of the world situation in which Britain was no longer playing the role of the lion. "He advised the Govt. to rely on the Congress in view of the war-danger but this is just what Imperialism itself longs for. To this end he would take the Congress, if he is allowed to and if Imperialism would agree. "He also warned the Govt. that so long as M. Gandhi lived there was chance of a friendly settlement." His warning turns out to be not the impending doom of Imperialism at our hands but the yearning of him and his like for "a friendly settlement."

The resolution of the Faizpur congress on Constituent Assembly says "The Congress does not and will not recognise the right of any external power or authority to dictate the political and economic structure of India, and every such attempt will be met by organised and uncompromising opposition of the Indian people. The Indian people can only recognise a constitutional structure which has been framed by them and which is based on the independence of India as a nation and which allows them full scope for development according to their needs and desires. The Congress stands for a genuine democratic State for India where political power has been transferred to the people as a whole and the govt. is under their effective control. Such a State can only come into existence through a Constituent Assembly elected by adult suffrage, and having the power to determine finally the constitution of the country. To this end the Congress works in the country and organises the masses and this objective must ever be kept in view by the representatives of the Congress in the legislatures." Satyamurthi & Co. have clearly been disloyal to the Congress according to which Constituent Assembly is the victory of the peoples will and arises out of the ashes of Imperialism Satyamurthi's inside the Congress have yet to be shown their place.

Federation Being Fought (?):

The Faizpur Resolution declared: "In the opinion of the Congress *any cooperation* with this constitution *is a betrayal* of India's struggle for freedom and a strengthening of the hold of British Imperialism and a further exploitation of the Indian masses who have already been reduced to dircet poverty under imperialist domination. The Congress therefore repeats its resolve not to submit to this constitution or to cooperate with it, but to combat it, both inside and outside the Legislatures, so as to end it."

On 31st August the Congress Premier of Madras Sjt. Rajagopalachari speaking on the resolution of Constituent Assembly in the Madras Assembly said "as when each member of the Indian States advanced to the level of responsible government, at least to the level of the provinces, they might admit a responsible representative of those States into a sort of authority, but not till then". He would agree to Federation, but make a condition, the same conditon, which a Jinnah or a Chintamani makes. We would like to Know whether the Madras Premier is carrying out or repudiating the Congress Resolution quoted above.

Mr. Satyamurthi speaking in the Central Assembly on 17th September, stated, "By all means, make a Federation of eleven self-governing provinces and keep the door open for the States to enter. Good States may come in, bad States may not. It is better that they do not.', Sjt. Satyamurthi certainly goes one step further than Sjt. Rajgopalachari.

What would we call these views, held and expressed by those who wield authority over our national movement, in terms of the Congress Resolution?

We have more than views, we get plans. In the Budget of the *Congress* Ministry of Bombay expenses for election to the Federal Assembly were provided for. It needed a token-cut to expose the scandal when on 14th September the Finance Member withdrew the item.

Federation, let us not forget, crowns the structure of the Slave Constitution,

The 'Advance' special correspondent reports that, "deep significance attaches" to the interview of Sjt Bulabhai, the Leader and Sjt. Satyamurthi. the Deputy-Leader of the Congress Party in the Central Assembly, with the Viceroy on 8th September. The London correspondents of newspapers have already announced that they were to be consulted over the Federation. We know where the Viceroy's consultations with them about sending Indian troops to China ended, in their agreement and even in their "Welcoming" the step. President Nehru had to wipe out this disgrace by announcing an All-India China Day for 14th September. The coming AICC meeting at the end of October in Calcutta has to devise effective ways to prevent another disgrace being heaped on us by Bulabhai & Satyamurthis and our movement being damaged by them.

PROVINCIAL AUTONOMY
AT WORK.

Drop the Prosecution.

Comrade S. S. Batliwala is in jail as an undertrial. He is in one of the Madras prisons and his accuser is the Government of Madras, of which Mr. C. Rajagopalachari is the Minister for "Law and order."

The daily work of British Imperialism is now to be done by Congress Ministers. Before April 1st what ever was done to silence the voice of Natonalist fighters, we at least knew that it was our avowed enemies who were persecuting us. How shall we complain now when a congress Prime Minister sanctions the prosecution of a fellow-patriot for sedition?

We are not here concerened with the legality of the case. The sessions judge of Nellore will decide it. But we

certainly challenge the wisdom and the expediency of sanctioning the prosecution by the Government. When the congress accepted offices, it was loudly proclaimed that it meant an extension of the national struggle to the councils. Is this the way the national struggle is being 'extended? Sedition law in India has been a notoriously elastic measure which was made to cover anything from crying "Down with British Imperialism" to preaching violent rebellion against British rule. Popular opinion in India has been bitterly opposed to this law and among the repressive laws whose repeal the congress has been demanding is Sec. 124-A of the Indian Penal Code. It is of course, not in the hands of the Madras Government, to repeal this law, but it is in their hands to defeat its Anti-Nationalistic aims by refusing to sanction any prosecution under it. Freedom of speech is the cardinal demand of the congress and it means that the congress whether in office or outside is pledged to secure it so long as freedom of speech is not interpreted as permitting direct incitment to violence.

The congress government may make a mistake but ought not to persist in it. We demand in the name of freedom of speech and the struggle for freedom that the prosecution against comrade Batliwala be dropped immediately. The Government must be aware of the wave of indignation that has swept over the whole presidency at the launching of the prosecution. The papers are full of protest meetings held in the big towns and in obscure viilages to demand the release of Batliwala. We condemn the action of the Nellore Magistrate for having refused to release comrade Batliwala on bail. Is the accused under our much advertised congress regime, to be denied the freedom to arrange for his defence? Surely the congress does not think lightly even of this elementary right of the accused to have all the facilities for defending himself. Once again we urge on the Government of Madras to drop this prosecution.

Seperation of Judiciary and Executive,

Power corrupts men but we see before our eyes the empty tinsels of office blinding the congress ministery to the realities of the situation. We understood that the congress took up office for the purpose of strengthening the fight against Britlsh Imperialism by utilising such of these instruments of power as are left in the hands of the provincial governments to defeat the purposes of British Imperialism. But from the way in which our Premier is "leading" this Province one would get the contrary impression, that Imperialism has been liquidated and a full fledged Peoples Government is already in full possession. This impression has been strengthened by the extraordinary speeches made by Mr. Rajagopaiachariar in the legislature on the question of Judiciary, and the police grant.

It is not necessary to go into the details of the controversy theoretical and otherwise, of the seperation of the executive and the judiciary. We are interested in it only so far as it is an imperialist device to hold control over the life of the people. This combination of the functions in India has always been the classical example of executive arbitrariness and despotic rule Rajagopalachri maintains that "splendid causes that led to the long standing and ancient agitation" no longer apply and consequently there is no need to fear that the ancient despotism will be continued. He proceeds to argue that creation of a separate and independent judiciary will erect a state within a state which will not be subject to the executive authority. From this he digresses to attack the general theory of the seperation of functions and also gives expression to his ideas of the state. "I do maintain the state is one and indivisible, its economic life, its political life, its judicial quarrels and

arbitrations, are one and indivisable." This shows a mentality that needs to be contradicted. It rests on the belief that the Congrese is going to continue in office for ever and that its powers of controlling the executive officers are very real and full. One should remember that the congress is fighting a battle with imperialism, and that its purpose is to smash all machinary that gives it strength. Mr Rajagopalachari says that it is the men who apply principles who are more important than our principles themselves.

But what is to happen if the Congress is turned out of office soon? The 'wrong' men will be in power again or is it that this Congress Ministry does not think in these terms of a changing situation? We agree that it is the nature of the State, not its institutional frame work, that explains its coercive character as against the people. But when possible the Congress must change the State apparatus with the purpose of making things more difficult for British Imperialism in the fight to come.

Also from the point of view of establishing a national democratic government an independent judiciary is necessary. Our Prime Minister's totalitarian theory of the assimilation of the People with the Provincial government established under the condemned Act, will mean that no one who disagrees with the ministry will have a chance if the judiciary is controlled by them. Their powers of stifling will become all the more effective. That this is not a theoretical contingency has been proved by the arrest of Comrade Batliwala.

So we must agitate for the seperation of the executive and the judiciary. In U. P. the provincial legislature has passed a resolution in favour of seperation unanimously and the Government have promised to consider the question soon. Being less Subtle in defending reactionary steps Pandit Pant's main argument against the motion was the cost. It is a severe commentrary on the lack of our organisation here that we are not able to put any effective pressure on the Ministry.

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The Defence of C. I. D.

One of the first acts of the U. P. Congress Ministry was to abolish the practice of reporting meetings by the C. I. D. They have also made substantial reductions in the police vote. But our Madras Premier, who follows a unique line on all issues, went out of his way to defend the Police in general and C. I. D. in Particular. Introducing the Police grant he said "We should make history this time by having this demand granted without any harsh language being expressed to-wards the Police adminstration." His speech on "spying being an ancient institution" has become notorious. Said he" if the Congress is to function satisfactorily to its own conscience and satisfaction in regard to principles of government it cannot dispense with the spying system any more than any other government" In all his speeches he indulged in the assumption that his government will not and cannot do any wrong,-it satisfies many right wing Congressites. But the people who have felt the iron hand of the Police and the irritable ubiquity of the C. I. D. can realise its full significance. For what purpose has the C. I. D. been kept in this country? It is only to prevent the anti-imperialist movement in this country from gaining strength; to disorganise that movement by preventing mass organisation. Surely, Mr. C. Rajagopalachariar does not believe that in the formation of the Congress Government in Madras this function of the C. I. D. has been ended. If he does not, how can he regard the C. I. D. as anything than an instrument directed against the freedom movement? The people will continue to regard the C. I. D. with hostility and even any other agency which is set up to frustrate the Nationalist struggle. In defending the C. I. D., Mr. C. Rajagopalachari is strengthening, and not weakening, the instrument established by British Imperialism for breaking up the national struggle.

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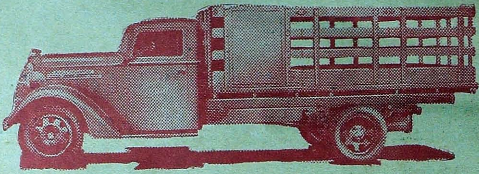

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